

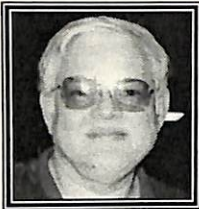
# Tales of Walnut Hill



By Robert Summa

Volume 3





## Welcome to the Tales of Walnut Hill

We have a rich history we will share as you read this book. We will look at the past and the all-time greats that left their mark on the history of Walnut Hill: the masters of rifle shooting and pistol shooting. They generated the spirit of the Hill through competitive shooting. What they built and shot was a challenge. They were the distinguished shooters of the Hill. They came from all over the country to shoot at

Walnut Hill. We have Harry Pope, the greatest barrel maker of his time and a master rifle shooter. We have Niedner, an all-time great, a master rifle shooter, and one of the top gunsmiths of his time who chased Geronamo all over the southwest in the 6th Calvary. Then there is Dr. Mann, the father of ballistics, who in 1909 published *The Bullet's Flight* in his quest for the magic bullet and the magic barrel for the perfect score with the perfect rifle. He was a medical doctor and gave up his practice for his quest in ballistics. Then there are D. L. F. Chase, Ned Roberts, Horace Warner, H. V. Perry, Norman Brockway, C. W. Rowland, H. L. Willard, E. A. Leopold, W. V. Lowe, the Russell brothers, Arthur Corbin Gould, N. C. Nash, O. E. Gerrish, John Kelley, Will Hayes, Dr. W. G. Hudson, the great offhand shot Adolph Strecker, Dr. Bakery, L. P. Hansen, Young, Mr. Fry, Daniel Fox, Major Hinman, F.J. Rabbeth and Professor Bell. All are the masters of the rifle. The masters of pistol are C. Paine, Tom Anderton, Eugene Patridge, and Dorothy Knight at Walnut Hill. The riflemen of the Hill, having looked at the American militia team's defeat at Creedmoor, decided to do something about it, so they trained a militia rifle team. Some were members of Walnut Hill and knew the game of long range shooting, and were sent to Creedmoor where they won every event entered. The Walnut Hill riflemen were men of stature: doctors, engineers, and masters of their trade. They were men that enjoyed the shooting sport and did all they could to preserve it for the future generations to come. They shot offhand at ranges of 600, 800, 900, and 1000 yards, holding the finest rifles of their day. H. Pope was the father of the gane twist rifle barrel. Pope and Niedner made barrels for Dr. Mann.

All proceeds from the selling of these books will go to the Massachusetts Rifle Association to preserve the history of the M.R.A. through our Museum. If you can help, I thank you. I am looking for old photos of Walnut Hill to share with our membership. The one thing I have learned about history: if someone does not record it, it is lost for all time. But these books will present a vast history which we will share with the world. As you read and look at all the photos, know the books will be a treasure for future generations after we have all come and gone. The books detail the Tales of Walnut Hill. And we will only print 100 books in each series, for this is truly a limited edition!

Robert Summa  
M.R.A. Historian at the Walnut Hill Range

## The Massachusetts Rifle Association

### Tales of Walnut Hill

Volume 3

I dedicate this book to  
Al Cappadona,  
for all his help over the years at  
Daniels Printing Co.



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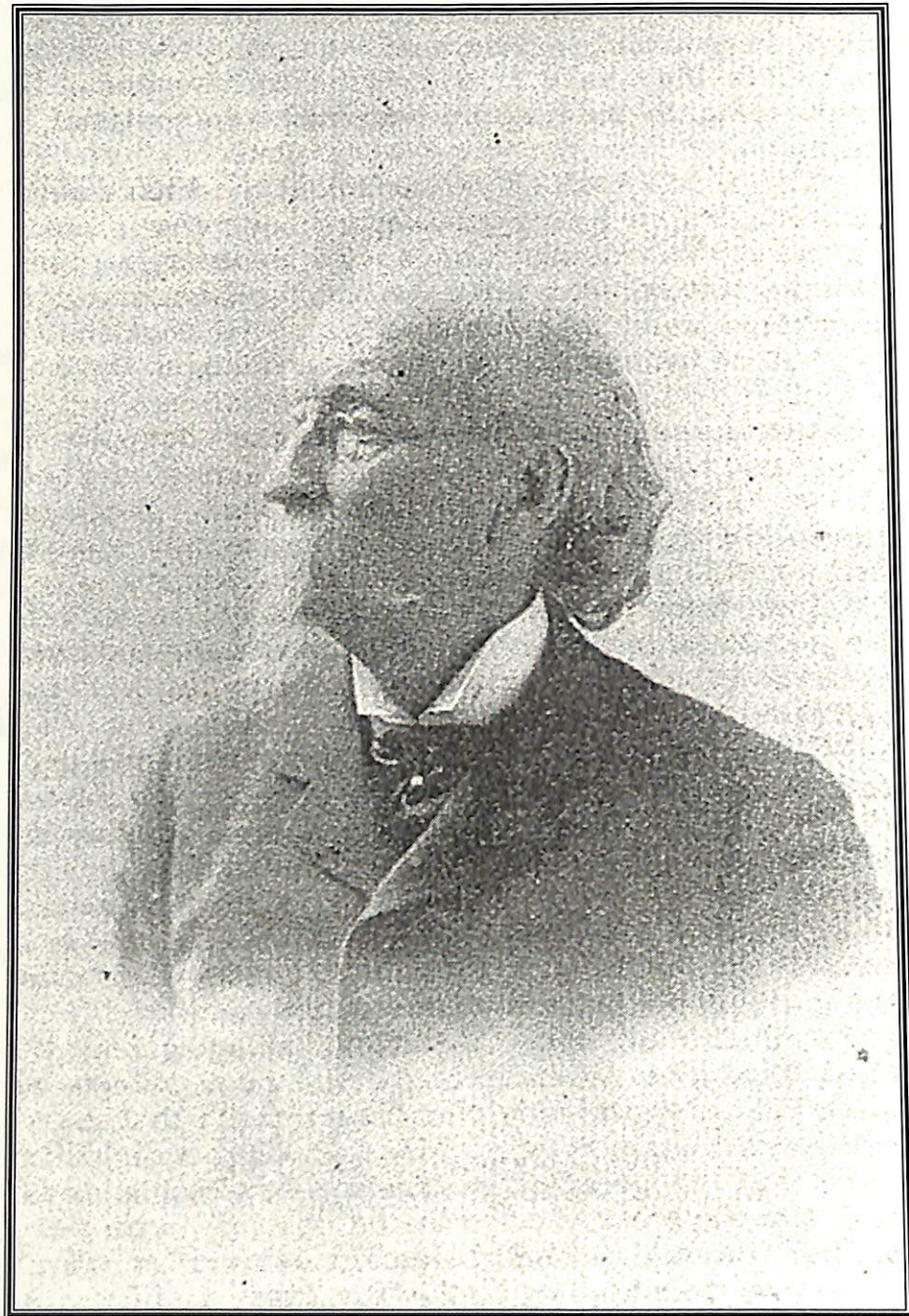
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# Introduction

You are about to go on a journey into the past. At the end of this road is the Massachusetts Rifle Association, the oldest shooting range in the United States. We have been shooting at Walnut Hill from 1875 to the present day; the stories and questions have not changed over the years. I hope you'll enjoy these unique stories and viewing photos of the time. The stories are very informative and record the bonding and respect of the many men and women of the era. Some of these stories are tragic, and will bring a tear to your eye. They'll cover rifles, pistols, trap shooting, hunting, and fishing trips by the members of Walnut Hill. It's like rubbing the magical lamp of Aladdin, reliving the myths and legends of the Hill. That genie of discovery has made possible the contributions of rich knowledge, accomplishments, and achievements, which have been hidden for centuries in the dark vaults of the MRA, waiting to be shared with the new generation of the Hill. All I can say is that there's something in the air at Walnut Hill—or it's the magic and intrigue of the all-time greats that have entered the hallowed ground of the Walnut Hill Legend!



## Dr. S.A. Skinner



## A Lady's Marksmanship

I have two objects in presenting this target. First, because I think it the best on record made by a woman in this state. The other object, to show the difference in eyes or sighting for different persons. On Oct. 4, I went to the rifle range, accompanied by my daughter. I sighted my rifle for a score, and made six 12's, two 11's, and two 10's, counting 114 on Standard American Rest target. My daughter then began to shoot. Her shots went between the 8 and 10 ring at 11 o'clock. She shot seventeen times, all in and on a 3 1/2 inch ring; ten were in a 12 ring. It was then too dark for further shooting. The following Monday, Oct. 7, we went again to the range. I put up the same target in the same place, over another target. My daughter then fired twenty-eight times; every shot went inside the 3 1/2 inch ring, making forty-five consecutive shots. The remaining five shots she could not shoot, as darkness came on. I challenge any woman in the State of New York to equal this. Every shell was loaded from my new powder flask, which never varies the quarter of a grain in loading hundreds of shells. Menicus. Hoosick Falls, N.Y.

(See page 8 for photo of Miss M. K. Skinner and Target.)

## A Rifleman of My Acquaintance

During the years I have been interested in that fascinating weapon, the rifle. I have met many individuals who are apparently as much infatuated with that arm as myself; but these riflemen have different ways of showing their fondness for the arm. Some are devoted to off-hand shooting at the target; others find their greatest pleasure in shooting game; while still others regard the rifle as an instrument of precision only, requiring the highest skill to demonstrate its fine shooting qualities.

Among my acquaintances is one gentleman whose greatest pleasure is to visit a rifle range, accompanied by his daughter, and there both father and daughter will shoot their rifles, compare notes, and experiment. After a day's shooting is over, they review the work, and are ready to start forth on another day, striving to eliminate the errors of the first day's shooting. This gentleman is Dr. S. A. Skinner, and his daughter Miss Mabel Skinner of Hoosick Falls; N.Y. The enthusiasm this gentleman has shown for firearms, especially rifles, throughout his life, the pleasure he derives in striving to make stuhhorn rifles perform well, and his inventions, have caused me to regard him as a true rifleman. I have from time to time gleaned something of his life, which it is my privilege to record here.

Dr. Skinner was born in Vermont and from a small boy was fond of firearms. He once told me that, when eight years old, he commenced to shoot his father's old flintlock musket, and from that time to the present has never been without more or less firearms about him. He was graduated from a country school when sixteen years of age. On my look of surprise at his early graduation, he explained to me that the cause of it was smoking out the schoolmaster with moist gunpowder because the pedagogue went home from spelling school with the young rifleman's best girl. That, however, finished his common school education. He received his medical degree from the University of Vermont, and in 1863 was appointed assistant surgeon of the Ninth Regiment of the Vermont Volunteers; but, on account of poor health, was unable to accept. Dr. Skinner has held many honorable positions in his profession, among which being president of medical societies.



I have often thought, and still think, that men of mechanical ingenuity are more strongly attracted to the rifle than those having no skill in that direction. Dr. Skinner has made many mechanical inventions, a number being for surgical splints and other appliances of his profession. He is also credited with the invention of an oil well for mowing machines, which, I believe, was applied to the machines of a large manufacturing establishment.

His attention for many years was largely occupied with his profession; but there came a time when he was forced to take some recreation, and his fondness for firearms caused him to indulge in shooting. He then applied his ingenuity to firearms, first inventing a revolving three-barreled gun. This arm he took to a United States Arsenal, at that time located in Windsor, Vt. He showed it to the officer in charge, who was courteous enough to look at it, while the inventor turned the crank till the dummy shells were exhausted. The officer then made the observation that it was a machine gun, and did not want it. Dr. Skinner took the arm home, and never showed it again.

Some years ago he invented a breechloading cannon, and one Fourth of July morning created a great sensation in his town by the rapid firing of his cannon. Nearly the whole village collected in his yard. This arm, however, was stolen from him, and the demands of his profession influenced him to abandon the invention. His next inspiration resulted in the production of a cane gun, which was sent to the Remingtons; but that company concluded not to manufacture it.

A few years ago Dr. Skinner turned his attention to modern rifle shooting from a rest. As Dr. Skinner was a life member of Walnut Hill, he would shoot with Dr. F.W. Mann at rest at Walnut Hill. What a glorious era to have lived in! During the time he has practiced this style of shooting, he has invented several rifle tools of unusual merit; in fact, his whole rifle outfit is one which shows remarkable ingenuity. There is a powder flask of his invention which will measure to 100 grains with perfect accuracy; there are re and de cappers, ball seaters, a machine for lubricating bullets, a swage, a loading dipper with attachment for shaking down powder, a pick for picking up wads, a bullet seater for using the crosspatch at the breech, and other appliances not to be found on the market, but possessing unusual merit.

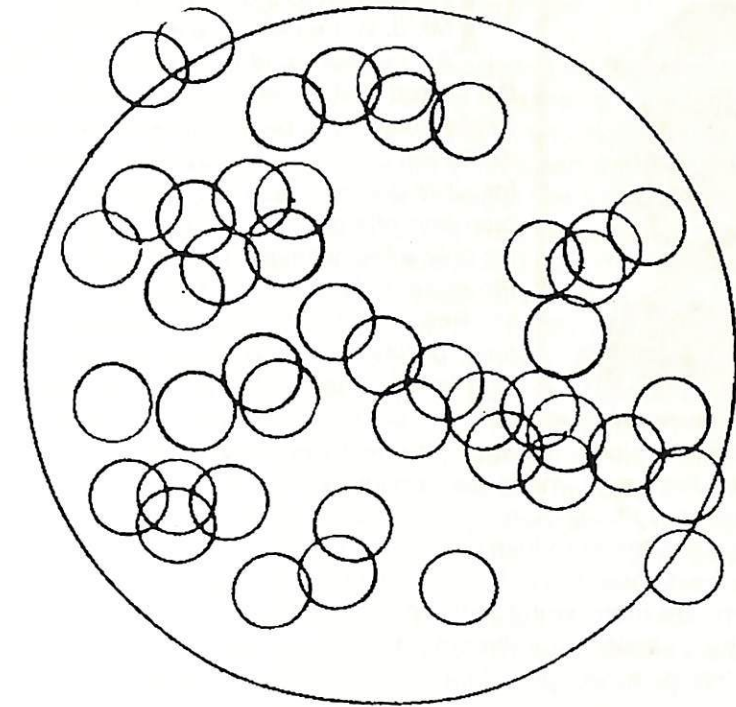
As a marksman Dr. Skinner stands high; I have seen scores of 113 made by him, and groups of shots that would count from 115 to 119. Like many other of the rest shooters, he is striving for that 120.

Although possessing the greatest enthusiasm for firearms, he confines his shooting to inanimate targets. Many contributions from his pungent pen have appeared in *Shooting and Fishing* under the nom de plume of Medicus, and those who have enjoyed his crisp remarks as much as the writer will, no doubt, be glad to look upon his likeness, which I am privileged to present herewith. R. Greenwood.



Marlin Rifle Model 1895

## Miss M.K. Skinner

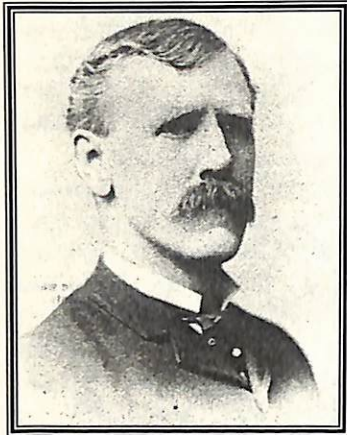


Forty-five consecutive shots at 200 yards by Miss M. K. Skinner; shot with a Winchester rifle .38-50-330; Rice telescope; bullet with cross patch loaded at breech.





## Death of Mr. Jabez B. Fellows 1896



It is with profound sorrow that we announce the death of Mr. J. B. Fellows, president of the Massachusetts Rifle Association, and one of the best rifle and pistol shots in the United States, which occurred on Saturday morning, September 28, of heart failure. The news of Mr. Fellows' death will be received with great sorrow by his many friends, for all who knew him regarded him as a true type of a gentleman and rifleman; it will also prove a great surprise to many, for only a few weeks ago he returned home from a European trip apparently in perfect health.

Mr. Fellows' career as a rifleman is interesting. He sought the sport purely as a recreation; but in a short time he became wonderfully proficient, and was recognized as one of the best off-hand shots in the country. He seemed to take to the sport

naturally, and his position of standing perfectly erect, with his left arm extended as far as he could reach on the barrel, made him a conspicuous object wherever he shot. He not only was prominent as a rifle shot, but was wonderfully skillful in the use of the pistol and the revolver, and since the introduction of pistol shooting at Walnut Hill, he has been regarded as one of the best shots of the Massachusetts Rifle Association. Both in rifle and pistol shooting, there are many wonderful scores recorded to his credit. Soon after he joined this association, he was elected a director, and has served as an officer of the association ever since, finally being chosen president of the association, which position he filled at the time of his death.

No one has done more to build up the Massachusetts Rifle Association than Mr. Fellows. He was an indefatigable worker in its behalf, and many of the improvements found at the range of this famous club were adopted upon his suggestion. His chief sport was rifle and pistol shooting.

A few years ago he sustained a great blow in the loss of his wife, and although he had a most devoted and affectionate family of children, his friends have felt that he never recovered from that blow. In business he was successful, and in business as in his social affairs, he won the confidence and esteem of all with whom he was brought in contact. He was a devoted husband and father, a true and trusted friend, and his life we regard as one great and grand clean score. There are medals and trophies in the MRA museum that Mr. Fellows had won and were donated to Walnut Hill.

*(See Volume 1 for a story on Mr. Fellows.)*



Stevens Walnut Hill Model Rifle

## A Prosperous Organization

The annual report of the Massachusetts Rifle Association for the year ending Jan. 1, 1895 has been published. This organization we regard as a model one, for no club in this country covers so thoroughly the different departments of shooting and has maintained them with such excellence. Rifle shooting, both for the civilian and the volunteer, finds encouragement at Walnut Hill; pistol and revolver shooting in various styles is encouraged, and trap shooting is a recognized department. This association owns, free from debt, one of the finest rifle ranges in the United States, and considering the accommodations for all departments of shooting is, without doubt, the best equipped range in this country. The range includes, we believe, between forty and fifty acres of land.

It has been the object of this association to provide every known requisite for safety, secure all necessary comfort, and make shooting as cheap as possible. In all the years of its existence but one serious accident has occurred, and then it was wholly a case of carelessness on the part of a marker, against which no precaution on the part of the association could prevent; all that have shot at Walnut Hill knew that the comfort provided for the shooter is unsurpassed; and as for cheap shooting, one cent a shot is the charge to members for practice tickets, which give a shooter a scorer, a marker, and every facility the association possesses. With all the cheapness of shooting, the treasurer's report shows the amount received last year for match and range receipts to be \$4,033.43.

The list of members shows 110 life members and 96 annual members. But still greater evidence of prosperity is shown in the condition of the treasury. The report shows that at the end of the fiscal year, with practically no debts, there is a balance in the hands of the treasurer of \$2,858.37, part of which is invested and bringing a revenue.

## Telescopic Rifle Sight of F. J. Rabbeth

I have several times, referred in my gleanings, to the attachment for a telescopic rifle sight worked out by Mr. F. J. Rabbeth of the Massachusetts Rifle Association. His plan, and other devices used by the rest rifle shooters at Walnut Hill are so arranged that a rifle when fired, receiving the recoil, throws the telescope forward, thus avoiding all liability of striking the eye with the tube of the telescope. A barrel of a telescope right rigidly fixed on a rifle barrel is likely to severely injure the rifleman for the above stated cause, and scarcely a rifleman have acquaintance who has shot with a telescopic sighted rifle for any length of time but has been struck and injured. By this device, the telescope can be slid forward while the rifle is being cleaned, if it be a breechloader; upon the rifle being reloaded and ready for another shot, the telescope is drawn back into place and the next shot taken. That this device is practical and reliable is shown by the shooting of Mr. Rabbeth and others at Walnut Hill.

Mr. John Sidle, optician and mechanic, 1029 Filbert Street, Philadelphia, recognizing the merit of this device, has embodied the main features of this improvement in attachment for telescopes, and is now ready to supply riflemen with these attachments for rifles. Mr. Sidle is also engaged in the manufacture of telescope sights for rifles, of which he has a full line.



## The Lady and the Rifle

One of the bright correspondents of *Shooting and Fishing* writes as follows in reference to the use of firing arms by ladies at Walnut Hill: "My wife took to revolver shooting as naturally as a duck takes to water, and from the start she shot well, even with a .38 hammerless, with hard trigger-pull and only 3 1/4 inch barrel, with this latter weapon, on the first trial, she put six out of ten shots in a two inch bull at 10 yards. She also shoots a rifle very well, and at 100 yards, but to shoulder and muzzle rest, she can average on four inch bull, about seven bull's-eyes out of ten shots, using my .25-20 Special Winchester target rifle; her highest score is 90 on Standard American target, at that distance." -Mr. E.E. Patridge

## Walnut Hill Gleanings

At the last meeting of the executive board of the Massachusetts Rifle Association, Mr. H. S. Harris resigned his post as statistical officer, and Mr. W. P. Spencer was elected as his successor.

On Saturday, July 11, the new target suggested by Mr. F. J. Rabbeth was tried at Walnut Hill. This target will be known as the Standard Ring target. It has a bull's-eye precisely the same as the Columbia; in fact, the bull's-eye was cut from that target. The change comes in the outer rings. After leaving the bull, with half-inch rings, the first ring is 1 inch wide, the second 2 inches, the third 3 inches, thus retaining the better points of the Columbia, including the bull's-eye count, and doing away with the large figures outside the black.

## Mr. F.J. Rabbeth 1896

The first meeting of the new board of directors of the Massachusetts Rifle Association was held last week, January 12, 1896, at which time Mr. F. J. Rabbeth, the well-known rifleman, was elected president of the association. The board of directors also voted to rent a room in the Equitable building in Boston for the use of the association.

## Mr. Henry S. Harris 1896

Mr. Henry S. Harris, the well known pistol shot of Massachusetts who holds the championship for pistol shooting for that state, has issued a very attractive calendar, on which is an excellent picture of himself standing in the position he assumes when aiming the pistol.



Stevens Rifle 1894 Model

## A Big Game Rifle

Reference has been made in these columns to a hunting rifle which the well known rifleman, Mr. C. W. Hinman, of Boston, recently procured. As this arm is somewhat out of the usual order of hunting rifles, we think a description of it and its performance at the target may interest our readers. His rifle is a Winchester single shot, weighing about 8 1/4 pounds. It is of .50 caliber, and shoots a 3 1/4 inch shell, with a charge of 140 grains of Hazard FG powder and a grooved bullet weighing 435 grains. While it is probable that riflemen will at once admit the killing power of this rifle, many would doubt its great accuracy; but if it possesses that accuracy, those familiar with rifles would probably believe it would be extremely difficult to demonstrate its accuracy.

The skill of Major Hinman is well known, and it is beautifully illustrated in his superior work with this arm in target shooting. The arm is supplied with plain open sights. Recently he shot this rifle at Walnut Hill, off-hand, at 200 yards. His first score counted 82 on the Standard American target, or 47 by Creedmoor count. His next score he did not finish, as he had but a limited supply of bullets, and he wished to use those that were left in another score, but in 8 shots he scored 60 points. He then entered another ticket, and made the following score: - 6 X 10 7 5 5 8 9 9 10.

This score counted 48 out of 50 by Creedmoor count. Putting the 28 shots together, they gave an average of 81 on the Standard target, or 46 1/2 by Creedmoor count. Major Hinman states that he could call his shots as well with that rifle as with his fine sighted .32-40, and believes that this powerful arm shoots as well as anyone can hold a rifle off-hand. The recoil is quite noticeable, but not severe enough to cause any unpleasant after effects. Major Hinman expects to use this rifle on his next hunting trip, and we hope to lay the results before the readers of *Shooting and Fishing*.

## Major Charles W. Hinman

Last week I met Major Charles W. Hinman, of Boston, as he was passing through New York City on his way to Philadelphia. Major Hinman is one of the best known riflemen in America, having a record in all styles of rifle and pistol shooting such as but few can attain. Business cares have compelled him to withdraw from the National Guard of Massachusetts, where he was regarded a tower of strength as a military rifle shot; he has also been obliged to refrain largely from target shooting with a match rifle. But he manages to find time each autumn for a hunt, and his bronzed face was an indication to me of his having recently returned from his annual hunt, without his informing me of the fact. This year he visited Northern Maine, and succeeded in killing three deer and one caribou, Major Hinman used his Lee magazine rifle, an arm worked over from a military to a hunting rifle, which arm I have several times described.

Major Hinman informed me that when coming out of the woods, he ran across Capt. W. H. Jackson. The younger generation of riflemen may inquire, who is Captain Jackson, but the veteran will not. Twenty years ago, Captain Jackson was one of the best known rifle men in America. He was a member of all the American small bore rifle teams that shot international matches. If I mistake not, he was one of the first to make a ten shot clean score of bull's-eyes at 200 yards, off-hand; a performance at that time important enough to have telegraphed over all this country. Several times he made clean scores of fifteen successive bull's-eyes at 1000 yards. In time he dropped from the ranks of active



target shooters; but two circumstances attest the fact that he has not lost interest in the spiral tube. He regularly attends the annual meeting and dinner of the Massachusetts Rifle Association, and he participates in a hunt each autumn. Captain Jackson succeeded in killing a fine bull caribou this year in the Maine woods; this Major Hinman told me as I left him on busy Broadway, which caused me to remark, once a rifleman, always one.

## Mr. Henry S. Harris

All that have shot at Walnut Hill knew that the comfort provided for the shooter is unsurpassed; and as for cheap shooting, one cent a shot is the charge to members for practice tickets, which give a shooter a scorer, a marker, and every facility the association possesses. With all the cheapness of shooting, the treasurer's report shows the amount received last year for match and range receipts to be \$4,033.43.

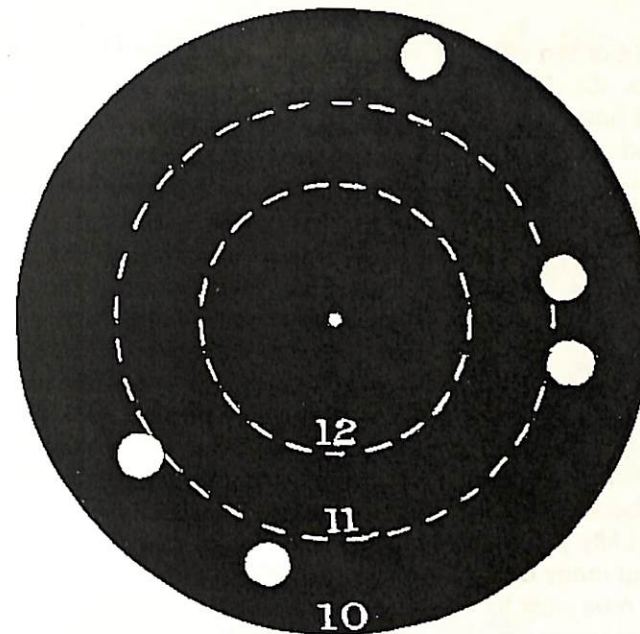
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It has many times been said that one may lose his superfine shooting form in pistol and revolver shooting quicker than in any other line of shooting. I think this is generally believed at the present time; and yet there are exceptions to all rules, and I had a fine illustration of this recently by receiving a target shot by Mr. Henry S. Harris, the well-known pistol shot and a member of the Massachusetts Rifle Association. Mr. Harris had not fired a shot with his pistol for some months, but on Saturday, November 3, 1896, he thought to try a few scores to see if he could hold his own old form. He was shooting shot strings, as he never tried that before in all his shooting. After a few sighting shots he began shooting regular scores at 100 yards, which resulted as follows

**First score . . . 10 10 10 10 10=50**

**Second score . . . 9 10 10 9 10=48 or 9s with the 10 shots.** The target made with the first score I have referred to as receiving, and it is so excellent that I cut from the target the 10 circle, and present it herewith full size. It will be observed that the 11 and 12 circles are shown in this target, but these lines do not count in pistol shooting at the range of the Massachusetts Rifle Association. All of the Standard American targets, I believe, at the present time, are made with the 11 and 12 circles, but they do not count in off-hand shooting with rifle or pistol; but by using this bull's-eye, one is able to follow one of the various styles of shooting on any target. Therefore, this score of Mr. Harris' means 50 of 50, or the possible in shots. I think this target is well worth publication, for it illustrates the high development of pistol shooting in America; and it also shows the superior pistols manufactured here and the perfect ammunition. The shooting which I present to the readers of *Shooting and Fishing* would be considered by many good work with the rifle at the distance named; in fact, there are many, very many, sportsmen who would find some trouble in duplicating this shooting with a rifle. The shooting was done with a Stevens pistol, Gould model, with the .22 long-rifle cartridges of the Union Metallic Cartridge Co.'s make.

(See top of page 14 for target.)



Five shots at 50 yards by Mr. H.S. Harris shot with a Stevens pistol, Gould model, and .22 caliber ammunition of Union Metallic Cartridge Co. make, target full size.

## Henry S. Harris Pistol Shooting in 1889

Some take intuitively to shooting, and accomplish almost at their first trials more than others do with a lifetime of practice. Much as I have written about shooting, I feel there are many who can tell much it has been impossible for me to record. Certainly one who has risen to prominence by superior skill can always tell of his prowess to willing listeners. I have written much in relation to pistol shooting, but have felt that it would be interesting to the readers of *Shooting and Fishing* to read the views of one of the most famous pistol shots in America, and I several times urged my friend, Mr. Henry S. Harris, of Boston, to tell me something of pistol shooting from his point of view. I finally persuaded this brilliant marksman to respond to my request. "For many years," Henry S. Harris said, I have been a great lover of shooting with all kinds of firearms, including the rifle, scatter gun, and later with the pistol. I began pistol shooting the latter part of 1889 simply by accident, as up to that time I never believed that I should ever be able to make a good score with this sort of weapon. It happened in this way: friends were shooting at Walnut Hill one day, and I was a spectator; someone asked me to shoot a score at fifty yards with his pistol. I accepted the invitation and surprised myself, as well as my friend, by making an average score. It was like a lady making her first bull's-eye. I wanted to shoot again; the result was a severe attack of pistol shooting fever from which I never recovered.

"Early in 1890, I bought my first pistol for target shooting—a 10 inch Diamond model Stevens, which I used continually for two years, making some fine scores. Since that time, I



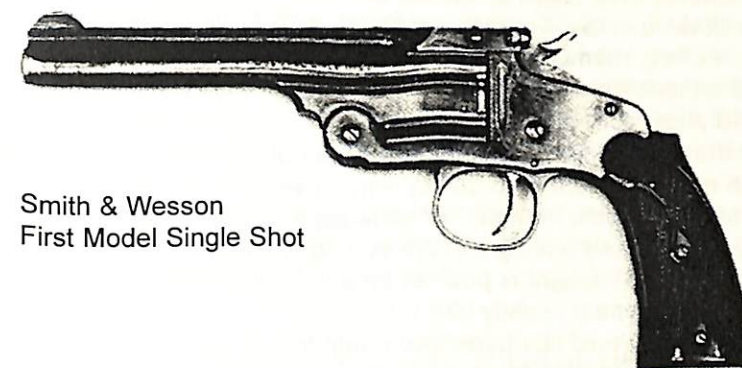
have owned eight or ten different pistols of the Stevens and the Smith & Wesson makes, including calibers .22, .25, .32, views of a .38. Among all the pistols pistol expert, now on the market that I have ever used, rifled and chambered to take the .22 long-rifle cartridge, I have never found any that did not shoot first-class; and while I think the .22 long-rifle cartridge is the best .22 cartridge to be had for general use, I feel sure that there is an unaccountable cartridge, not in every package, but surely in every few boxes, and sometimes several in one box, so that no pistol should be condemned for an unaccountable shot now and then with this cartridge. Another fault has recently developed. In the last 100 cartridges I have used, as many as ten or twelve have burst in the head, causing a low shot at 7 or 8 o'clock. This I hope will not continue. In one of my recent scores of fifty shots, I lost as many as eight or ten points from this trouble. I have spent many dollars and much time on the calibers of .25, .32, and .38, but am perhaps no wiser than when I began. Many times when I thought I knew it all and had my pistol and ammunition down fine, I found that I, or the pistol, or the cartridge, was all wrong; but I am still hoping to get a perfect shooter in these larger calibers. My advice to all beginners is to stick to the .22 long-rifle cartridge for pistol shooting at fifty yards; I believe if they do so they will make no mistake, and will save lots of money and many disappointments. Pleased to bear in mind that all of my remarks in this respect has reference to single shot pistols and not to revolvers.

"I think that for target shooting, the Gould model Stevens, and the Smith & Wesson make, are the only single shot pistols now on the market worth mentioning to choose from; and they both have their good and bad points. For quality of finish, fine workmanship, shape of handle, and fine material, Smith & Wesson in my opinion, stands at the top. As to the shooting qualities, I think there is no perceptible difference between the two makes. For ease of manipulation, for arrangements of sights, screw wind gauge, and for safety, I prefer the Stevens. I want to mention right here that in my opinion the Smith & Wesson pistol without the rebounding hammer should be allowed on any range, on account of its being as enclosing the barrel, the cartridge is likely to exploded; I have seen this occur several times with the pistol in the hands of our most careful shooters; of course, if the shooter would always think to put hammer at half-cock, it would be safe; but now and then he will forget, and off goes his cartridge with the possibility of a sad result.

"It is true, the Stevens pistol is not a rebounding hammer, although it should be; but as you cannot tip the barrel up until you put the hammer at half-cock, there is not the same danger as with the other. I hope I may be allowed to speak about the outs of these two makes of pistols as they appear to ins, for it may result in improving these two popular pistols. I would mention as outs of the Smith & Wesson: the combination for revolver, no screw wind gauge, the rear sight being on the hinge fastening for the barrel, and the danger of accidental discharges unless it has a rebounding hammer. Some of the outs of the Stevens pistol are as follows: not fine enough workmanship, too soft material in the hammer and trigger, and an awkward handle. When closing the barrel of the Smith & Wesson pistol, great care must be used, or the catch and sight on the rear of the barrel may not go way down, and as a result, the shooter gets a very high shot; this is a serious fault, and I know many shooters that will testify to this fact. I want to say that the firm of Smith & Wesson has been very kind and patient with me as a pistol crank."

(See page 16.)

## Single Shot Target Pistols of the Era



Smith & Wesson  
First Model Single Shot



Stevens Target Pistol Gould Model



Wurfflein Target Pistol



Since the article by Mr. Harris, which recently appeared in these columns, I have received some inquiries from fellow shooters, who wished to know how many of the pistol shots at Walnut Hill were in favor of the new target, with 11 inch bull and white 10 ring. Only about a half dozen of our members have tried it as yet, for during the winter, the cold detracts somewhat from the pleasure of pistol practice, as one's hands are apt to become thoroughly chilled before a 10 shot score is finished.

We also find that the .22 long-rifle cartridges are not as reliable as could be wished, drop shots being much more frequent than during warmer weather. If one is accustomed to sight in the white just below the bull, the new center is apparently no advantage; but to those who, like the writer, try to hold the front sight in the 10 ring, it seems to be quite a help in defining them clearly, particularly if the light is poor, or on a cold day, when the radiation from the barrel causes the sights to appear slightly blurred.

I notice friend Harris would like to receive credit for his numerous 11's and 12's. Personally I think the time for this has not yet come, and that the higher count should only be adopted when scores of 100 become fairly common—a state of affairs which I hope to see him bring about.

All the rest shooters at Walnut Hill who have rifles fitted with telescope sights now use the bull's-eye with white center exclusively, as it enables them to see the cross hairs plainly.

Judging from recent letters, the Stevens Favorite rifle seems to have become quite popular. If it were fitted with a shell ejector, it would leave little to be desired. Some recent experiments with nitro powder in a rifle of this model showed me that a solid, close fitting breechblock is desirable, even in a .22 caliber. The black powder was removed from some longrifle shells and an equal bulk of hard grain Schultze substituted, followed by the regular 40 grain bullet. When these charges were fired, the shells split at the head, and pieces of copper were tightly wedged between the barrel and breechblock.

As the caliber and powder charge increases, we generally take it for granted that the strain on the breechblock becomes greater. That this is not necessarily so, the following goes to prove: A gentleman of large experience was at one time using a .38 .90 rifle. When the cartridge was pushed well into the chamber there was a slight space between the breechblock and head of shell. In this rifle, he found that almost invariably the shells would bind in the chamber on the discharge taking place, and would not be driven back perceptibly. In further support of this, he cited a case where a cartridge became stuck part way in the chamber, and as all efforts to dislodge it by driving a rod from the muzzle simply resulted in upsetting the bullet, the barrel was sent to a gunsmith. He screwed it in a vise, and after taking due precautions, struck the primer. The discharge drove the bullet out, but did not start the shell, and some force was required to remove it.

In using greased bullets, I long ago formed the impression that the grooves should be well filled with lubricant in order to give the most uniform results. Mr. Rabbeth recently made some experiments in this direction which seem to settle the question. A number of bullets were lubricated carefully, so that the grooves were full, and were fired into a box of wet snow. They came out in good condition. Then a few were wiped so as to leave the grooves half filled, and on these being recovered they were found to have upset excessively in the barrel, the grooves near the base being almost obliterated. From these latter one would not expect even shooting.

The question as to the length of time a rifle barrel will retain its fine shooting qualities will always be of interest, and any method which will prolong the life of an accurate rifle is worth considering. For the past year, when cleaning my .32-35-175 Maynard, I have used two wiping rods, each with two cloths, and keep those on the rod used for the second wiping lightly oiled. This barrel leaded slightly when new, but since adopting the oiled rags, no further trouble was experienced, and undoubtedly the bullet passes through the rifling with much less wear on the lands than is the case when the patch comes in contact with the dry steel.

In reply to your Buffalo correspondent, in case his courage has not failed him before reaching the end of these notes, I would say that the backstop for bullets I mentioned some time ago was made of equal parts of tin and lead. -J. Hadley

## Shooting and Drinking

A few readers of *Shooting and Fishing* appear to think that our reference to the evils of drinking at shooting tournaments is more severe than the occasion demands. In reply to this we would say that this journal has ever been foremost in denouncing all that tends to degrade, even in the slightest manner, so legitimate a sport as shooting at the traps, whether at live birds or inanimate targets. Most assuredly no backward step will be taken in this matter. We are well aware that sportsmen as a class are the most whole-souled and generous men that ever drew breath. It is owing to those very qualities that they countenance on the part of a few actions which are unpleasant to the many, things, which should not be overlooked because of the debasing influences they exert upon the young sportsmen of the country. A good deal of the fault we refer to is owing to that wholly American custom of returning in kind an invitation to join another in; to be frank about it, taking a drink, it is this disposition to appear as generous as one's companion that is responsible for much of the practice we speak of. To elevate shooting in the eyes of the general public, to give it a standing in the community, has ever been the aim of *Shooting and Fishing*. That a large success has been already attained in this direction, it seems almost needless to mention, and much of that improvement in the conduct of shooting tournaments is due to these efforts. Time was, and not so many years ago, either, when a week's shooting given by either state organization or individual club was but the opportunity for six days of dissipation. Of course not the coarse dissipation of the drunkard who loves drink for itself, but that joviality which turns night into day and the imbibation of liquor that ever goes with such courses.

Happily this is about relegated to the past. In truth, it is but companion to that era when birds in pigeon matches were barbarously mutilated in order to obtain a seeming advantage in the making or winning of a wager. The time will come, and the sooner the better, when shooting and drinking will not be seen together. For years one of the most successful gun clubs was the one with its home at Springfield, N. J., under the management of E. D. Miller, in all the years of its successful running no liquor of any kind was sold upon the grounds.

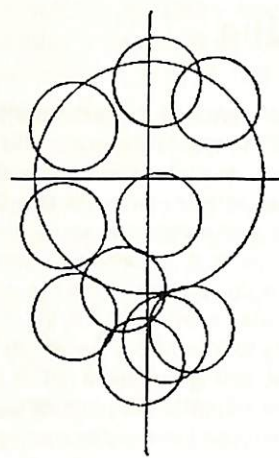
The Boiling Springs Gun Club is one of the few clubs that recognizes the fact that a sportsman's club should not turn its shooting grounds into a saloon or receive money by the sale of so-called "bar privilege." And the famous Massachusetts Rifle Association, which is one of the most prosperous clubs in America, owes its condition to a strict rule prohibiting the presence of liquor on the range.



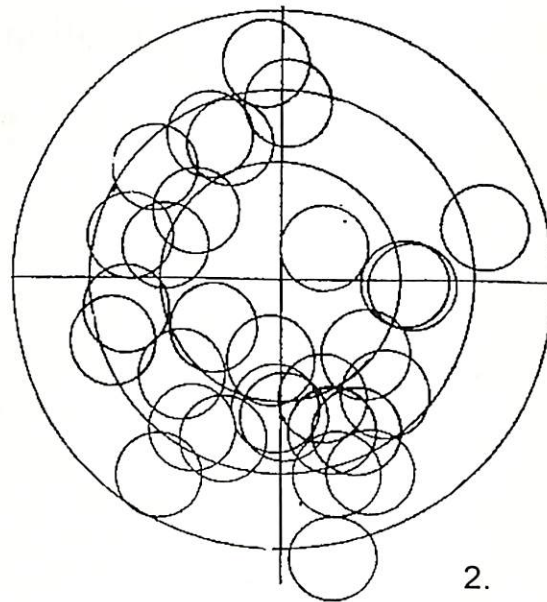
## Mr. Sumner Paine 1896

In our last week's issue, Mr. Sumner Paine, in his communication from Paris, France, referred to several diagrams of targets that were forwarded with his letter. As we stated last week, the demands upon our columns necessitated holding over some of these cuts, and they are herewith presented. The first group of shots shown was fired by Mr. Paine January 4, 1896, in Gastinne - Renette's pistol gallery in Paris. The shots were consecutive, ten in number, and made with a pistol. The cut is exact size of original target.

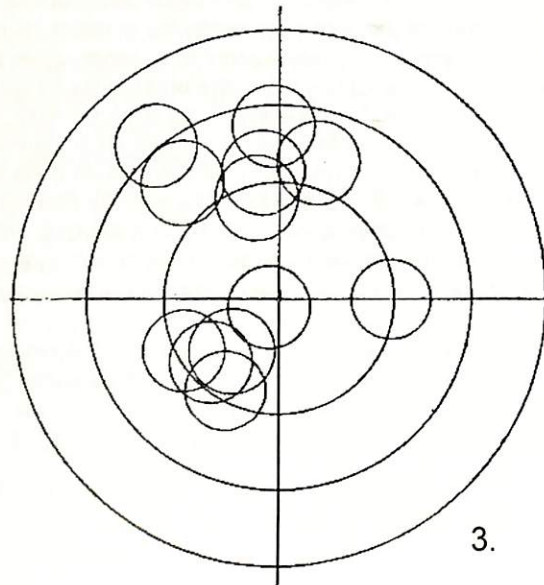
The second illustration is of a group of thirty consecutive shots, fired by Mr. Paine January 5, 1896, with pistol and nitro powder. The second ring shown is almost identical in diameter with that of the 9 ring of the Standard American reduced target. The last group shown was made by Mr. F. B. Crowninshield, of Boston, in the Gastinne - Renette gallery in Paris, on June 21, 1894. It is also reproduced exact size. The Gastinne - Renette range is 53 feet for medal shooting and 98 1/2 feet for duel practice.



1.  
First Target  
10 consecutive shots  
Mr. Paine  
January 4, 1896



2.  
Second Target  
30 consecutive shots  
Mr. Paine  
January 5, 1896



3.  
Third target  
12 consecutive shots  
Mr. F.B. Crowninshield of Boston  
June 21, 1894

## Florida Notes 1896

Mr. F. J. Rabbeth, the well-known Massachusetts rifleman, returned to Palatka yesterday and left for the other coast this morning for tarpon fishing. He reports bobwhite as affording good sport, the scores running from thirty to forty per day, and fifty on one day.

On the first of the month he captured six black bass which weighed fifteen pounds. He claims to be having a fine time, and I don't doubt it in the least, as the weather conditions are simply perfect. He has left a red-tailed hawk here to be mounted, which he shot with his three barreled gun at about 125 yards. He also killed a bald-headed eagle with a Stevens Pet, .22 caliber, by aiming five inches over, and about the same windage. I envy him his good time; wish I could have a little of it in mine, but I might as well wish for wings. I am happy to say he has recovered his rods, which I reported his losing last week, and I suppose he will be using one of them by this time tomorrow on the Gulf of Mexico.

Palatka, Fla.

## Walnut Hill October 18, 1896

We publish here with a group of ten successive shots made at a distance of 50 yards rest, with a Winchester rifle, .30 caliber. The cartridges were factory loaded with smokeless powder and half mantled bullets. The shooting was done at the range of the Massachusetts Rifle Association, Walnut Hill, by Mr. F.J. Rabbeth. We have also received some excellent targets made at 200 yards with the same rifle, shot by Mr. E.E. Patridge, the owner of the rifle.



1893  
Mr. F.J. Rabbeth  
(J. Francis.)



10 consecutive  
shots at rest



## The Choice of a Pistol

In *Shooting and Fishing* February 21, 1896

Mr. H. S. Harris presents a very interesting article on what he knows about single shot pistols. One can readily accede to Mr. Harris the privilege of criticizing such weapons, from his great experience, and also from the fact that he has few equals in the use of this particular arm. While I have never had the pleasure of equaling the brilliant performances of Mr. Harris, my interest and experience has extended over a number of years with both the Stevens and Smith & Wesson arms, and while I heartily agree with Mr. Harris in what he has pleased to call the "outs" of these two weapons, I do not think he is justified in making the assertion that these two pistols are the only ones on the market worth mentioning from which to choose.

If Mr. Harris has not used a Wurfflein pistol, he has no doubt seen one, and which, by the way, Mr. Sumner Paine, of Boston, used in a match at Walnut Hill on June 4, 1892, making a score of 462 points out of a possible 500, which tied the best amateur record at 50 yards at that time, the details of which I beg to refer the readers of *Shooting and Fishing* to that very interesting and instructive publication, *Modern American Pistols and Revolvers*, by Mr. A. C. Gould. I would respectfully call his attention to the fact that the many defects which he has pointed out in the Stevens and Smith & Wesson pistols are not apparent in the Wurfflein. In the first place, the Wurfflein pistol has an automatic rebounding hammer, which enables one to open or shut the arm without first cocking it; the action is positive and strong, and made in the best possible manner, and can be more easily manipulated than any other tip-up action I have ever used; an improved hinge-joint, so constructed that it is impossible to pinch the hand in opening the action, as is the case with the Stevens; the ejector is both positive and strong, and can be returned to its place without closing the action, affording a more convenient method of inserting the cartridge. The handle is made with or without the spurtrigger guard, I prefer it without, and conforms more to the old style dueling pistol, with a gradual slope which is readily appreciated by those who have become expert enough in the art to express an opinion.

The wind gauge and elevating sight of the Stevens pistol is the poorest thing of the kind I have yet come in contact with, and my greatest difficulty with it was its desire to jump, induced by the recoil of the arm and, as Mr. Harris has said, one is obliged to keep in touch with a file and screwdriver in order to have it work properly. In this respect, the Wurfflein pistol is equipped with a wind gauge sight, which also admits of elevation, so constructed as to reduce the frequency of jumping to a minimum; its accuracy in comparison with other arms is equal to any single shot pistol made. It is not my intention to overrate the Wurfflein by underrating the Stevens or Smith & Wesson pistols, or to secure for Mr. Wurfflein a free advertisement; and to those who may do me the injustice to think so, I beg to state that I have no interest in Mr. Wurfflein's business, nor do I derive anything from it, except the pleasure I gain in shooting the pistol, and I merely make these statements from my experience with the pistol for the purpose of calling the attention of those who are interested in pistol shooting, or who contemplate buying such a weapon, that there are features in the Wurfflein, not apparent in either of the other two, which cannot fail to commend it to those who are interested in this most

enjoyable and instructive sport. Mr. Harris' recommendations are also very valuable to those who make fire arms, as are also the suggestions to those who contemplate indulging in this sport; but I would like to ask Mr. Harris if he means that he places the black pin-ball front sight in the center of the bull's-eye, and if he really sees it sufficiently accurate to be able to call a shot. I have heard of many whom make such statements, but I have never been convinced of the fact that it was possible to see black on black at such a distance, and, without being personal, I really thought they were "talking through their hats." The idea of an 11-inch black and a white 10, 11, and 12 ring would be a novelty at least, and while it is hardly possible that the 120 would be made, it would demonstrate the possibilities of the weapon and individual using factory ammunition.

The .22 long-rifle cartridge for pistol shooting is, without doubt, the most accurate ammunition of its kind made, and under good weather conditions will shoot with remarkable accuracy; but I have found the .25 rim-fire a very good cartridge to use in a Stevens pistol and has remarkable accuracy.



Stevens Target Pistol  
Gould Model



Smith & Wesson  
First Model Single Shot



Wurfflein Target Pistol



Mr. Henry S. Harris



## An Expert Lady Pistol Shot 1888

Riflemen and pistol shooters who frequent Walnut Hill have often had the pleasure of seeing fine exhibitions of pistol shooting by several ladies who accompany their husbands to this famous resort. It is noticeable that whenever a lady summons sufficient courage to try to shoot a rifle or pistol she generally surprises herself and her friends by the excellence of her work, and this has been demonstrated so many times that the writer has formed the idea that the reason ladies have the reputation of not being able to shoot is because they are afraid to try, and if they did try, they would be as good shots as the sterner sex, and frequently better.

There is one little lady who frequently accompanies her husband to Walnut Hill, and while the husband is a fine pistol shot the wife seems to be quite as expert. Mrs. John L. Fowle is the lady's name; she is a resident of Woburn, Mass. The unusual skill she has lately displayed would entitle her to all the credit which such shooting would elicit if done by a gentleman, and when we consider the work was done by a lady, it seems all the more wonderful. On November 6, 1888, Mr. Fowle suggested a little target practice, and his fair partner having attended to household duties thought she would join him. A regulation Standard American target was placed at a distance of 50 yards and the pistol handed to Mrs. Fowle. The shooting was done in strings of ten shots, three strings being shot and the following record made.

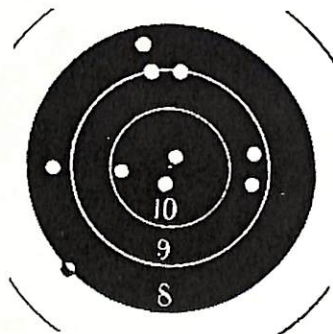
1st string,	9 6 9 9 10 10 7 7 10 8 =85
2nd "	10 9 9 9 9 8 8 10 8 10 =90
3rd "	10 7 7 8 8 10 9 8 9 8 =84

Now the average marksman can stand being crushed and out-shot occasionally, and it is said that Mr. Fowle, by combating with the pistol giants at Walnut Hill, had learned to hear an occasional defeat with meritorious fortitude, but to be so unmercifully beaten by his little wife, was, to say the least, something he had not calculated on just at present. It was rumored that the husband charged the wife with practicing with his pistol while he was attending to business, but this is not credited, as he seemed to be delighted beyond description at her wonderful success.

Mrs. Fowle has the best known record on the Standard target for thirty shots by a lady. Her second string, counting 90, was a clean one of bull's-eyes, and is illustrated. Out of thirty shots fired there were 25 bull's-eyes. The shooting was done with a 10-inch, .22 caliber Stevens Gould Model pistol with Winchester ammunition.



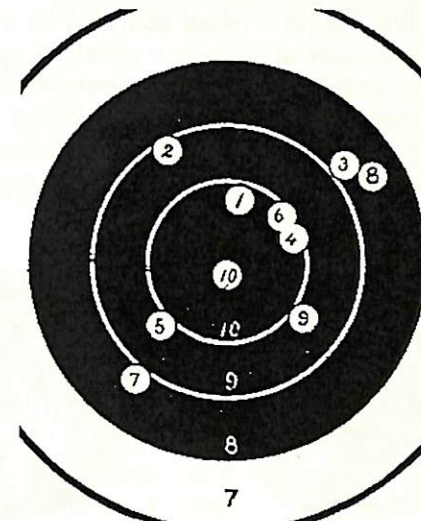
Ten consecutive shots at 50 yards by  
Mrs. John L. Fowle



## A New Pistol Record

Mr. George R. Russell

The Standard American target, reduced to 20 yards pistol practice, as adopted by the St. Louis Pistol Club, has been added to the attractions of the Massachusetts Rifle Gallery at Boston, and on January 24, 1896, Mr. George R. Russell succeeded in making a score which, we believe, is the highest yet recorded. It was shot with a .22 caliber Stevens' pistol, at a distance of 20 yards, and aggregated 95 points. The target is reproduced in full size, showing the order and location of the shots.



Score of 95 out of a possible 100, on Standard American target, shot by  
Mr. George R. Russell, with a Stevens pistol, at 30 yards.

## Matches at Walnut Hill 1890

I consider the system of matches arranged by the Massachusetts Rifle Association for 1890 one of the best schemes for the encouragement of marksmanship ever yet devised; no feature is omitted that will effectively carry forward the intelligent purpose of the managers, and the prizes when won will represent well earned victories. The plan is well adapted to the very nature of target shooting. And the projectors show a clear insight into its requirements. Such a plan, or some modification of it, should be adopted by every rifle shooting center throughout the country. So that a general system of interest in this delightful sport may be carried forward. Fortunate Boston representing as it does the highest excellence in music, drama, opera, fine arts, and all intellectual pursuits, what a place for the enjoyment of all that makes life pleasant! With the present high development of marksmanship, may we not almost call it a fine art, and in this, as other pursuits, Boston is the acknowledged hub from which radiates the latest and best developments. Great place!

Wilmington, Del., February 12, 1890 - H. Simpson

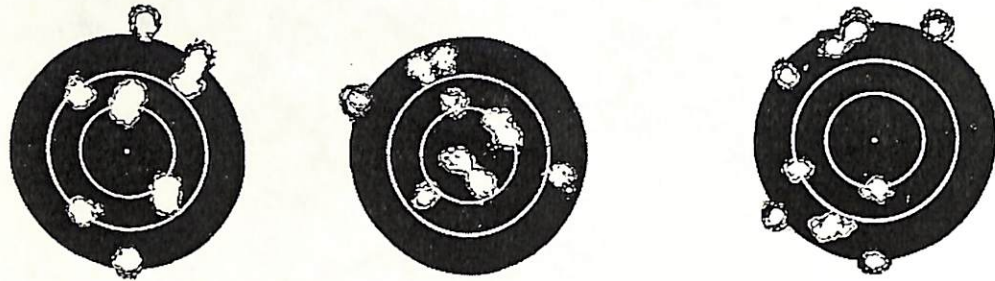


## A Young Marksman in 1888

One of the attractions at the Massachusetts Rifle Gallery, Boston, has been the rest matches which have been considerably patronized by the frequenters of that famous resort.

The really excellent marksmen find it no easy task to keep the shots in that bull's-eye at a distance of forty yards, and men who are able to run through the day shooting at 200 yards, and not get out of the black, are exasperated to think they cannot run any great number of shots without dropping out of the bull's-eye with the .22-caliber in doors.

An amusing incident recently occurred at the Mass. Rifle Gallery. Master George E. Russell, son of one of the proprietors, a youth of ten years, seems to have inherited a love of shooting, for he is never so happy as when permitted to visit the gallery and allowed to shoot. A number of boxes are pulled up for a platform and the youth is occasionally allowed to fire a number of shots. Last week while shooting he made the unusually good run of thirty consecutive bull's-eyes in the ten shot, clean scores, which are illustrated. The rifle barrel was rested, as is all the rest-shooting done at this gallery. Old marksmen are prophesizing great work from this youth later on, for the average marksman cannot now begin to equal this work.



Thirty consecutive shots at forty yards, by Master George E. Russell

## Mr. Rabbeth Withdraws His Design for a Standard Target

Mr. F. J. Rabbeth, the well known rifleman who recently submitted a design for a Standard Rifle target through these columns, writes us as follows: "I would like to withdraw the design for target offered by me and published in *Shooting and Fishing* some months ago. I think Mr. Keough's design a better one with the count from 1 in center to 20 outward; but am of the opinion that the Standard American be redrawn so as to eliminate all fractions of diameters less than  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch, but conforming to those lines as closely as such change would permit, would be a better all round target for all classes of riflemen than any yet shown. The advantages are that marking can be done with the ordinary clock dial and is more rapid. Targets could be drawn outside the ring, and an important advantage would be that rest scores have a different count from offhand as now on the Standard. This feature should be preserved, else there will be many poor rest scores masquerading as offhand. Redrawn, the Standard American would have a center ring for rest shooting  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches in diameter; for offhand the 10 ring would be inches in diameter. Both of these rings are of such diameter that in neither style of shooting can perfect scores be often made, and the ideal target should be such that the highest skill could occasionally make a perfect score. So long as ties do not become too frequent there is no objection."

## Further Experiments with the .22-Caliber Long Rifle Cartridge in a Stevens Pistol

In my last article on the .22-caliber long rifle cartridge I gave the results of shooting this cartridge in a Stevens pistol. The work secured attracted the attention of two of the best pistol shots about Boston. One was the well-known professional, Mr. W. W. Bennett, the other the expert amateur, Mr. J. B. Fellows. These gentlemen devoted a half day at Walnut Hill to experimenting with this arm.

The score cards of Mr. Fellows show the following shot on American Standard target, off-hand:

### 50 Yards.

10 8 10 8 9 9 8 10 9 9=90

9 8 10 10 6 9 9 8 8 8=85

### 100 Yards.

7 9 4 7 6 5 8 9 7 9=71

9 8 9 8 9 8 9 9 5 7=81

### 200 Yards.

5 4 3 6 4 6 7 3 9 5=52

On Saturday, September 15, 1888, it was decided to learn the range of this wonderful cartridge, if possible, and with these two experts the writer proceeded to Walnut Hill. It was found extremely difficult to sight on the third class target at a distance much beyond 150 yards, and the shooting was done on the second class target, commencing at 100 paces and falling back fifty yards after each seven shots. Mr. Bennett shot a Stevens pistol, Gould model, which weighed 2 lbs., 2 ozs. It had a ten-inch barrel, which was rifled and chambered for the long rifle cartridge. A temporary rear-sight was affixed to the rear slot, which was found so high as to compel the marksman to aim at the bank below the target, which no doubt made it more difficult to make a good score than it would have been if he could have aimed directly at the bull's-eye. Mr. Fellows shot with a Remington pistol, .32-caliber, with a 12-inch barrel, chambered for a Winchester cartridge, holding 20 grains of powder and a bullet weighing 115 grains.

The shooting resulted as follows:

### 100 Yards.

Mr. Bennett 5 4 5 5 4 5 5=33

Mr. Fellows 5 5 4 5 5 5 5=34

### 150 Yards.

Mr. Bennett 2 4 4 3 4 2 4=23

Mr. Fellows 4 5 4 5 5 4 5=32

### 200 Yards.

Mr. Bennett 3 3 4 5 5 3 5=28

Mr. Fellows 4 4 4 5 4 3 4=28



**250 Yards.**

Mr. Bennett	2 3 4 4 2 4 5=24
Mr. Fellows	2 3 0 5 3 4 0=17

**300 Yards.**

Mr. Bennett	4 4 4 2 5 0 4=23
Mr. Fellows	5 2 4 3 0 2 0=16

**350 Yards.**

Mr. Bennett	3 3 2 0 2 2 0=12
Mr. Fellows	2 0 3 4 2 0 0=11

There was no spirit of rivalry in the above shooting, the only object being to learn the range of the pistols, and it is believed that the results obtained with a .22-caliber pistol with the short ten-inch barrel, will be a revelation to every one.

It will be observed that the little arm shot with great accuracy at a distance of 300 yards. Later in the day, Messrs. Bennett and Fellows retired to the 50-yards pistol target, which is the 200 yards Standard American rifle target, where they shot a friendly match of 50 consecutive shots each, with the following results

Mr. Fellows	9 8 9 7 9 8 7 10 9 8=84
	9 7 9 8 9 9 10 6 10 10=87
	8 9 10 8 10 8 9 9 8 8=87
	9 9 9 10 9 9 8 7 7 10=87
	8 10 9 7 8 10 10 9 9 8=88=433

42 bull's-eyes

Mr. Bennett	9 9 9 10 10 10 7 10 9 8=91
	10 9 6 10 10 8 8 10 10 9=90
	8 9 10 10 10 9 10 10 10 9=95
	9 9 8 10 10 7 10 10 8 10=91
	8 10 7 10 8 10 10 6 9 10=88=455

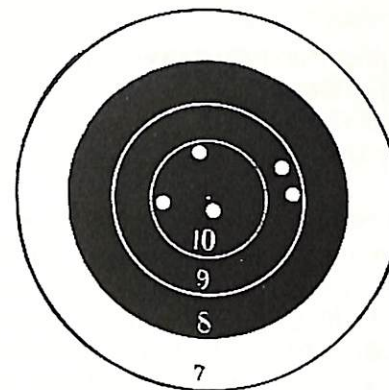
43 bull's-eyes

On September 22, 1888, Mr. F. E. Bennett, the American revolver champion, fired 100 consecutive shots at 50 yards, with the Stevens pistol and this cartridge, recording 97 bull's-eyes out of 100 shots, or an aggregate of 906 points, on the Standard American target. The pistol shooting done of that day at Walnut Hill by Mr. Bennett and other contestants, and reported in another column, was all done with a Stevens pistol and the .22-caliber long rifle cartridge.

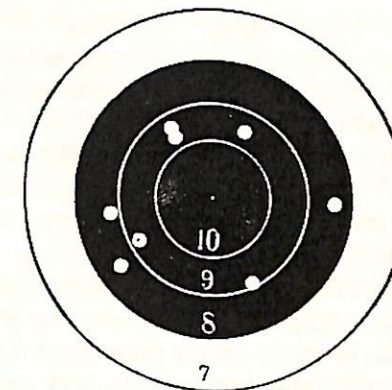
Ralph Greenwood.



Stevens Pocket Rifle



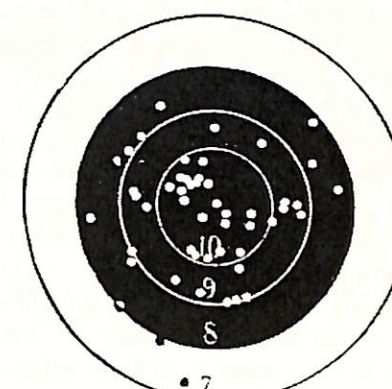
Five consecutive shots at 75 yards, by Mr. W.W. Bennett, with a Stevens pistol and .22-caliber long rifle cartridge, U.M.C. make.



Eight consecutive shots at 100 yards by Mr. J.B. Fellows, with a .22-caliber long rifle cartridge, U.M.C. make with Stevens pistol.



Ten consecutive shots at 50 yards, score 95, by Mr. W.W. Bennett. Stevens pistol, U.M.C. .22-caliber long rifle cartridge.



Fifty consecutive shots at 50 yards, by Mr. F.E. Bennett, Stevens pistol, .22-caliber long rifle cartridge.



Mr. J.B. Fellows



Mr. W.W. Bennett



Mr. F.E. Bennett



## Reloading Pistol Cartridges

Boston Mass., August 21, 1888

I have lately experienced considerable trouble in reloading cartridges for my .44 caliber Smith & Wesson Russian Model revolver, and having overcome the difficulties, I am glad of the opportunity to donate my information to other pistol shooters who are perhaps experiencing the same difficulty. I was desirous of reloading my shells, but I found, in spite of the care I used, I would get frequent unaccountables.

A few weeks ago I was shooting at Walnut Hill in company with Mr. J. B. Fellows, and observed the unusually fine shooting done by him. He fired just 50 shots, at 50 yards, on the Standard American target, which aggregated 425 points, which would make the ten shot strings average 85. This is very fine shooting, and is seldom surpassed by the best professionals. I expressed my surprise at the excellence of the work, and was informed that the ammunition was home made, and was astonished to learn that the cartridges were loaded with a round bullet and a light charge. Mr. Fellows' mode of loading is as follows.

After shooting a lot of factory made cartridges, he carefully punches out the exploded primer. The shells are then washed, after which they are dried in a moderate heat. When the water is thoroughly dried out of the pockets of the shells they are reprimed with care to avoid punching out the pockets in the folded headed shells. The next operation is charging the shell with powder. Mr. Fellows uses ten grains of the new American Powder Mills' Pistol Cartridge Powder. Over this charge he places a round ball of pure lead, which he seats with a tool devised by himself, which is a ball-seater, with a knob at one end and a plug of the diameter of the inside of the shell at the other. The plug end is concave to fit the top of the round ball. Along the side of the plug is a groove to permit of the air escaping when the snug fitting plug is placed in the shell. After seating the ball it is necessary to lubricate. A bit of cold lubricant is put in each shell, and the ball-seater forces it down on top of the bullet, and by turning the tool once or twice the lubricant is distributed evenly around the edges of the top of the round ball. Mr. Fellows believes the excellence of his work depends to a great extent on the uniform amount of lubricant used and the uniformity in distributing it around the edge of the bullet. Place more lubricant on one side than the other, and uneven shooting will result. It is absolutely necessary to pay attention to this point in order to secure the best results. I have found that a majority of pistol shots fail to make satisfactory scores because they flinch in anticipation of the recoil. I have dropped into the rifle galleries in various cities and seen fine shooting done by marksmen with reduced charges, and have seen these same men do wild shooting with the full charge out of doors. The reason is they "yank" the pistol and flinch when about to pull. They literally pull the trigger instead of pressing it, with a heavily charged revolver their hand trembles like an aspen leaf, but they hold beautifully with an uncharged or lightly loaded revolver. Besides this, the recoil with a heavy charge seems to shatter or affect the nerves in the arm, and make good holding quite difficult. These faults can be corrected by using light charges. I have tried Mr. Fellows' mode of loading, and recommend it for the following reasons:

Great economy; no fouling of the pistol; one can shoot fifty, and I think a hundred shots, without cleaning the revolver; no fatigue from the recoil; you can use the sights that come on the revolver and aim directly at the bull's-eye; there is no flinching from the recoil, as it is almost imperceptible. I think if pistol shots tried this mode of loading they would increase their score from five to ten points. I find I can.

-Y. Knip

## The Challenge from Walnut Hill

Mr. F. J. Rabbeth stated he would give \$500 if Dr. Spencer would duplicate his scores at Walnut Hill, under the conditions he claims to have shot at Bunker Hill, Illinois. Another rifleman desires to wager \$500 that Dr. Spencer cannot duplicate his scores at Walnut Hill. Another party will contribute \$500 to see him duplicate his scores. Dr. Spencer will be permitted to choose any week, out of which he may select a day to repeat his performance, and receive the above amounts if he repeats his performance.

Mr. N. Washburn, the veteran rifleman, called at the office of *Shooting and Fishing* Wednesday, Aug. 29, and stated he would be glad to wager fifty dollars that Dr. Spencer of Bunker Hill, Ills., could not duplicate his rest score in ten shots at 225 feet. He stated that the score purported to be made at 225 yards was beyond the possibilities of rifle, ammunition and man.

A word about Mr. Washburn's score of 119. This gentleman was formerly one of the best long range shots in America; in fact, he at one time won the long range championship. He has shot in America and England, and won many victories, and is one of the oldest active riflemen today. As long range shooting was abandoned in the East, he occasionally shot on the rest matches at Walnut Hill, but complained much of failing eye sight, but his love of rifle-shooting influenced him to provide for his defective vision, and he procured a Malcolm telescope and attached it to a Ballard .38 caliber rifle which had been rerifled by Warner & Lowe, and occasionally visited Walnut Hill. He is the only person for a long time who has shot a telescope-sighted rifle at Walnut Hill.

## Greenwoods Gleaning

Mr. Henry S. Harris 1889

I recently saw a very effective device at Walnut Hill rifle range, which I believe would be highly appreciated by riflemen, or those who hunt with a rifle and are compelled by defective vision to resort to spectacles. It was an ordinary Lyman rear sight, attached as usual to the tang of the rifle, but in place of the peep hole was a loop about inch in diameter into which was set an ordinary lens from an eye glass. The rifle was fitted with front and rear open sights, and the Lyman sight on the grip was used only in place of the glasses on the nose of the shooter where, when hunting, they are frequently knocked off, especially when hurrying from one point to another and taking a quick shot. With this device the owner says he is not obliged to stop and adjust his spectacles before taking aim, for the glass is always in the right place. Mr. Henry S. Harris, secretary of the Massachusetts Rifle Association, was the originator of this useful arrangement, which may or may not be new, but is a novelty hereabouts.



## The Walnut Hill Gold Medal

Lieutenant Hussey visited Walnut Hill, Nov. 6, for the purpose of shooting for the gold medal offered by the Massachusetts Rifle Association for anyone who secured 10 scores of 46 or better, 10 shots to a score, Creedmoor target, possible 50 with the U. S. Springfield rifle as issued by the State of Massachusetts. I urged him to fire 100 consecutive shots in order that I might compare his shooting with Private Young's, although Lieut. Hussey had no idea of competing with him. Lieut. Hussey's shooting pleased me as much as any I ever witnessed, for his position, which is shown in the accompanying illustration, is such a grand one, so practical, so soldier-like that, in my opinion, it is worthy of imitation by young, aspiring military marksmen or those who hunt with the rifle. To hold a military rifle in the position adopted by Lieut. Hussey for 100 consecutive shots shows a wonderful command of that arm. The result of his hundred shots was as follows:

4 4 5 5 4 4 4 5 5=45  
 5 4 4 4 4 5 5 5 4 5=45  
 5 5 3 5 5 4 4 5 4 5=45  
 5 5 5 4 4 5 4 4 4 5=45  
 5 5 4 4 4 5 5 4 5 4=45  
 4 4 5 5 4 4 5 5 4 5=45  
 4 5 5 5 4 4 5 4 4 5=45  
 4 5 4 4 5 5 4 5 4 4=44  
 4 4 4 4 4 4 4 5 5 4=42  
 5 5 5 4 4 4 5 5 5=47=448

Fifty bull's-eyes, 50 centres

The Springfield rifle, shot by Lieut. Hussey, was fitted with the Buffington sight, and the front sight was covered with the regulation sight cover as issued with the arm. The ammunition was home made or reloaded cartridges. On the following Saturday, Lieut. Hussey shot at Walnut Hill, and secured the additional scores of 46 or better, required to take the gold medal, among which was one score of 48. I regret I failed to preserve the decimal count of Lieut. Hussey's scores. The shooting was done on the Standard American target, but scored by Creedmoor count, but I remember that the 100 shots were in a smaller circle than were the same number of shots by Private Young, as Lieut. Hussey had no shots outside of the circle.

My object in elaborating on these two performances is to leave a record for future reference. I think these scores perhaps prove several mooted points. I am inclined to believe the following, which has been strengthened by these scores: The U.S. Springfield rifle is an accurate rifle.

The Springfield rifle is capable of securing the possible, or shooting ten consecutive shots into the 8-inch bull's-eye at a distance of 200 yards. It is possible to acquire sufficient proficiency to place 10 consecutive shots in the 8-inch bull's-eye at 200 yards, using the off-hand position.

As good shooting may be done in a strictly offhand position as in any other, if persistently practiced.

Under favorable weather conditions it is possible to score by Creedmoor count, off-hand, as high an aggregate with the Springfield rifle as with any rifle.

That properly reloaded ammunition is equal, and in some cases superior, to factory loaded.

That under favorable conditions, a person skilled in the handling of a military rifle can, with the Springfield rifle, especially by Creedmoor count, equal his work with a match rifle.

That fine shooting can be done with a strictly open-sighted rifle. That there never should be a handicap given to military rifles in a contest permitting any rifles. Military matches should call for military rifles as issued to governments or states. Matches permitting any rifles should be open to all arms under national rules-no points given to any rifle.

- Ralph Greenwood



Lieutenant W. G. Hussey



Position adopted by  
Lieutenant W. G. Hussey

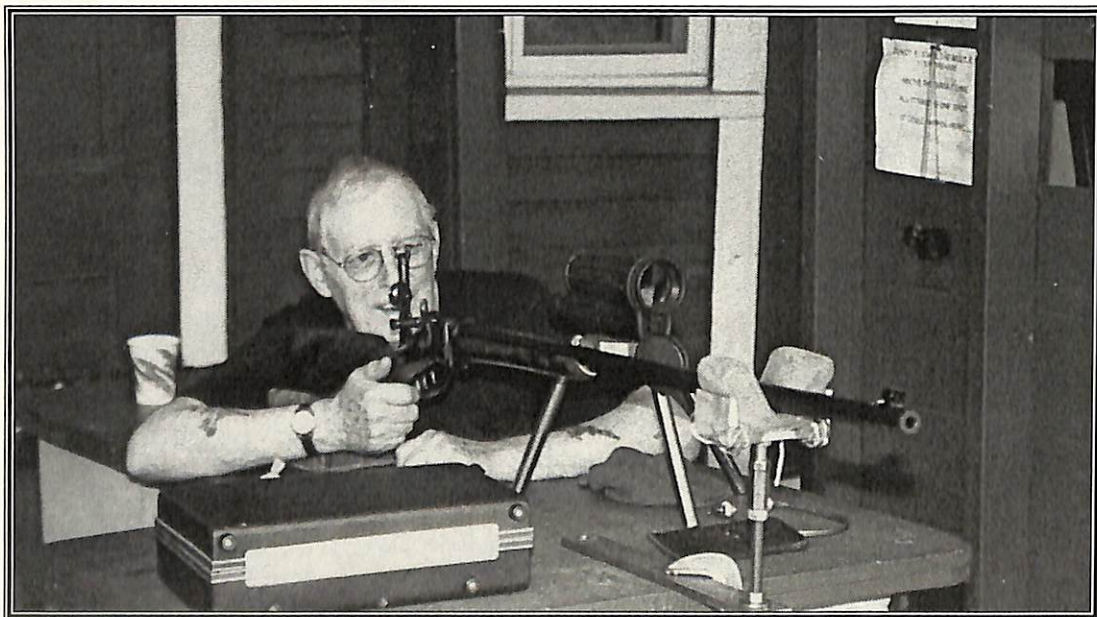
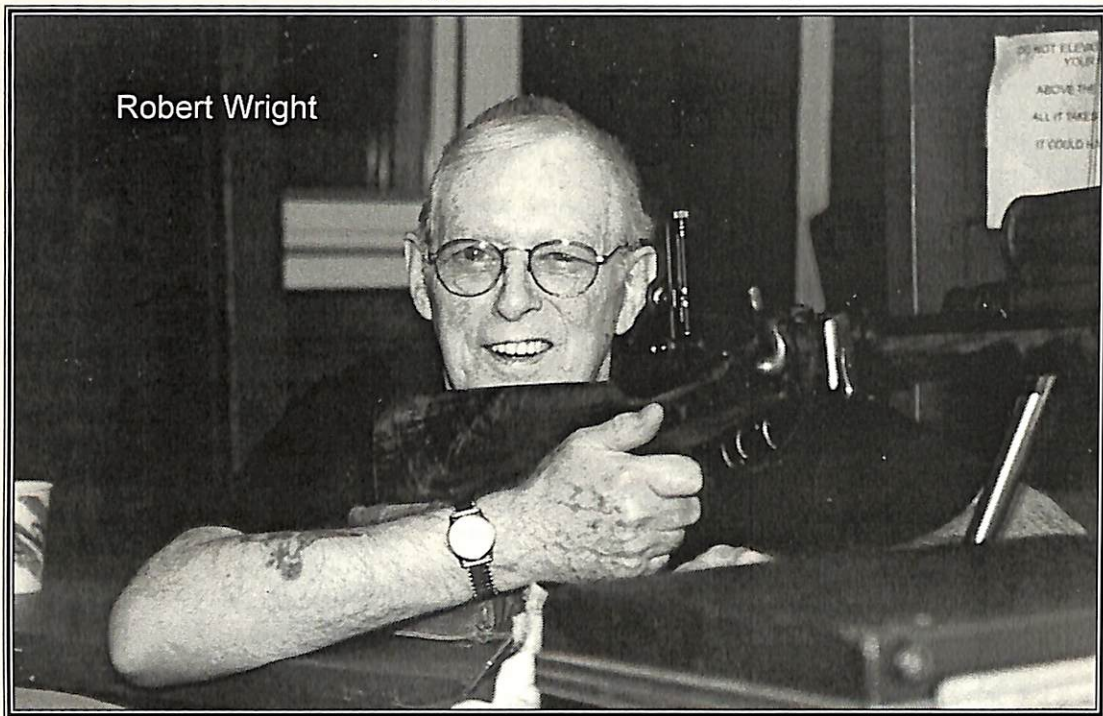


Winchester Single Shot Rifle

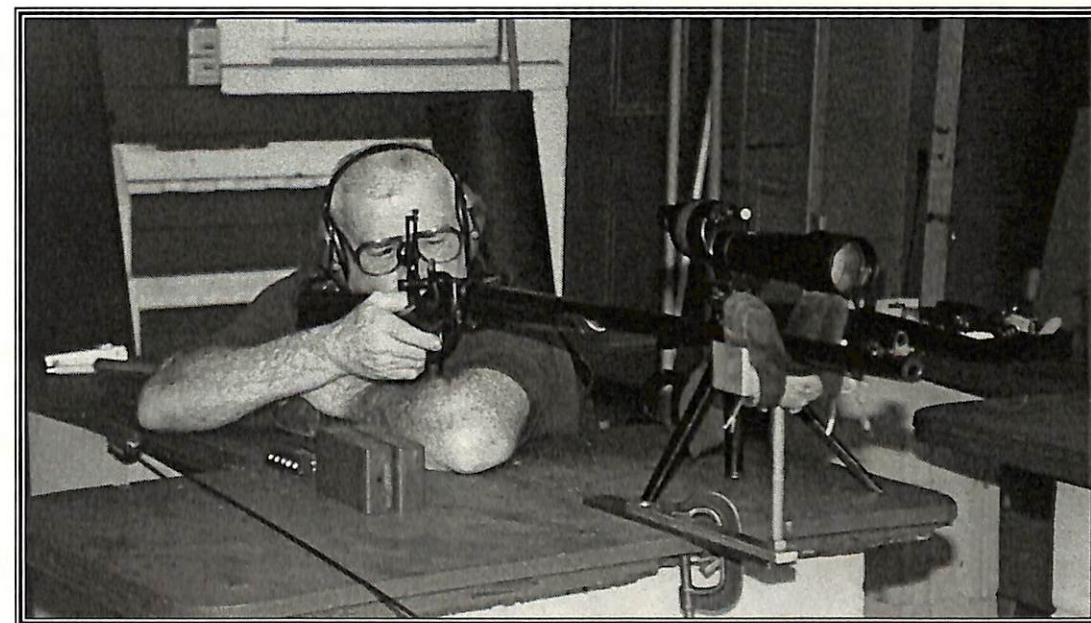
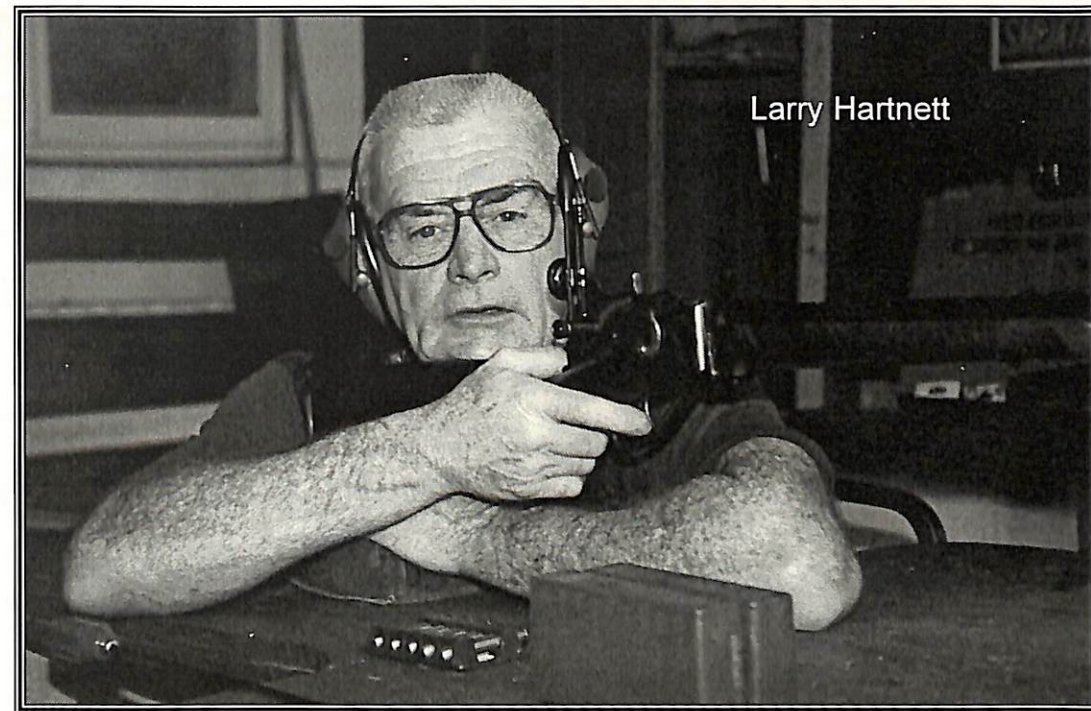


# The 2002 Buffalo Shooters of the Hill

Robert Wright

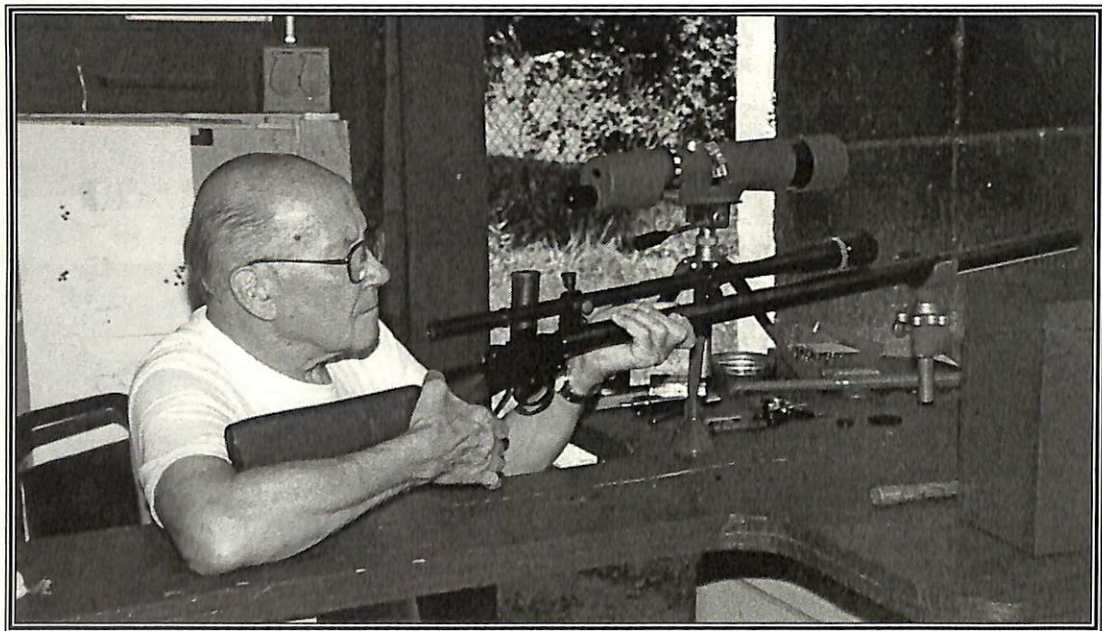
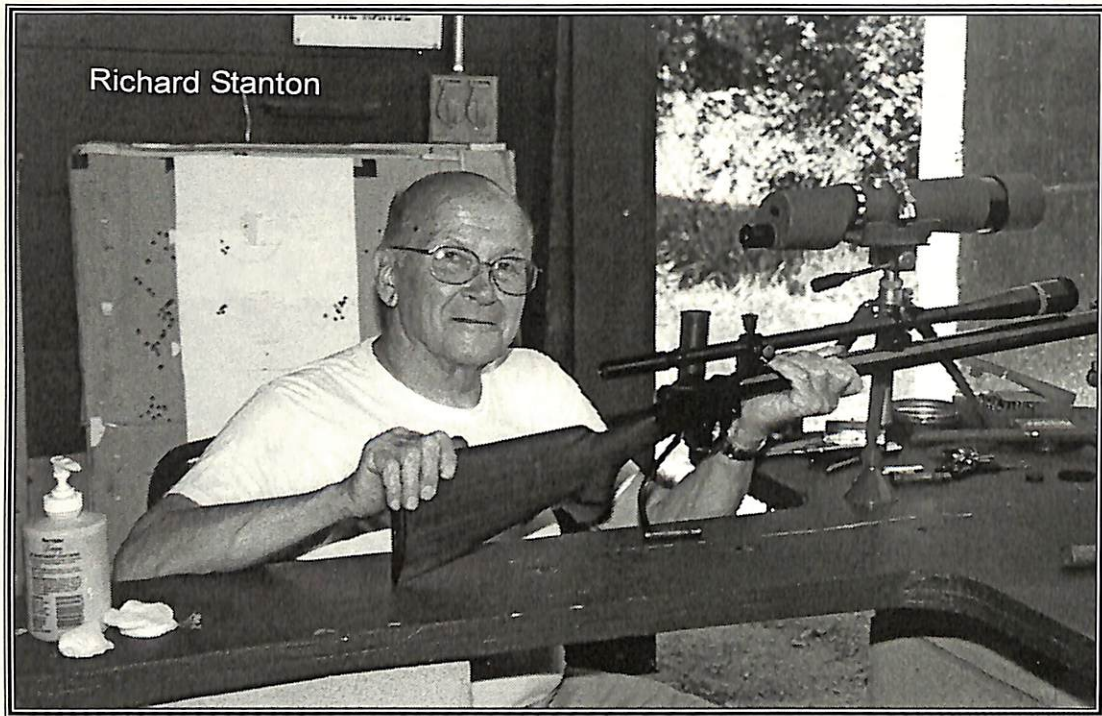


Larry Hartnett

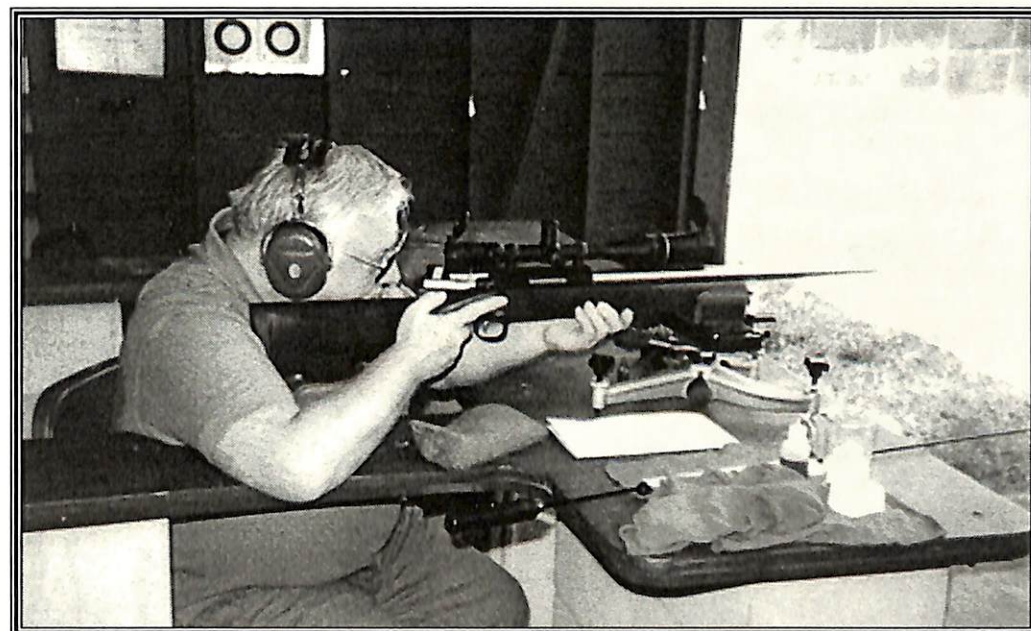
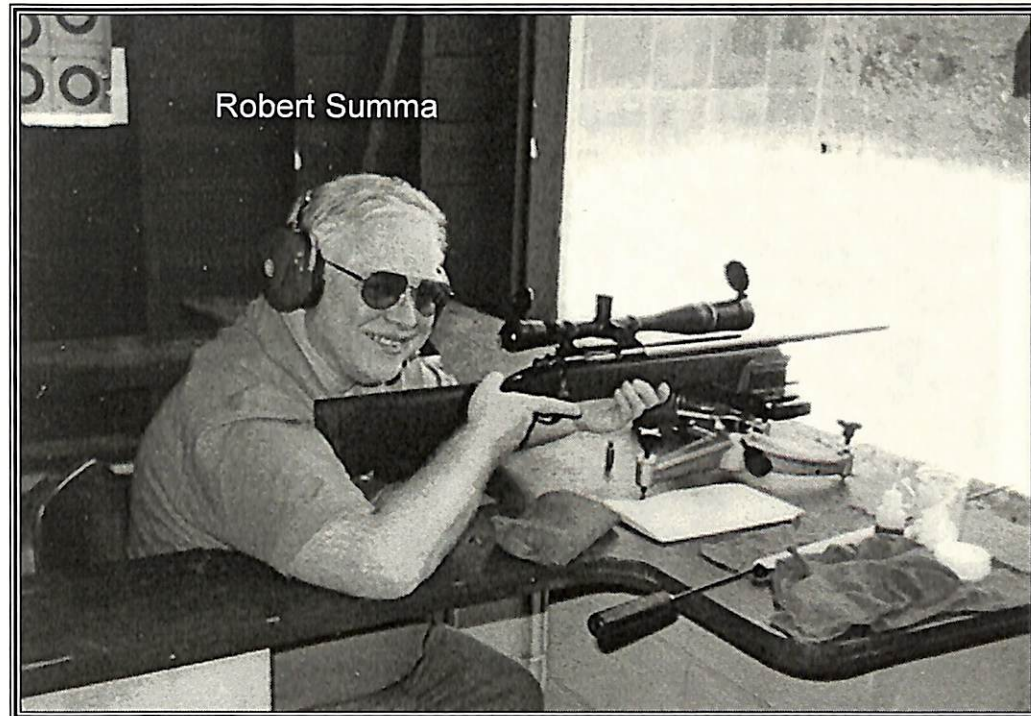




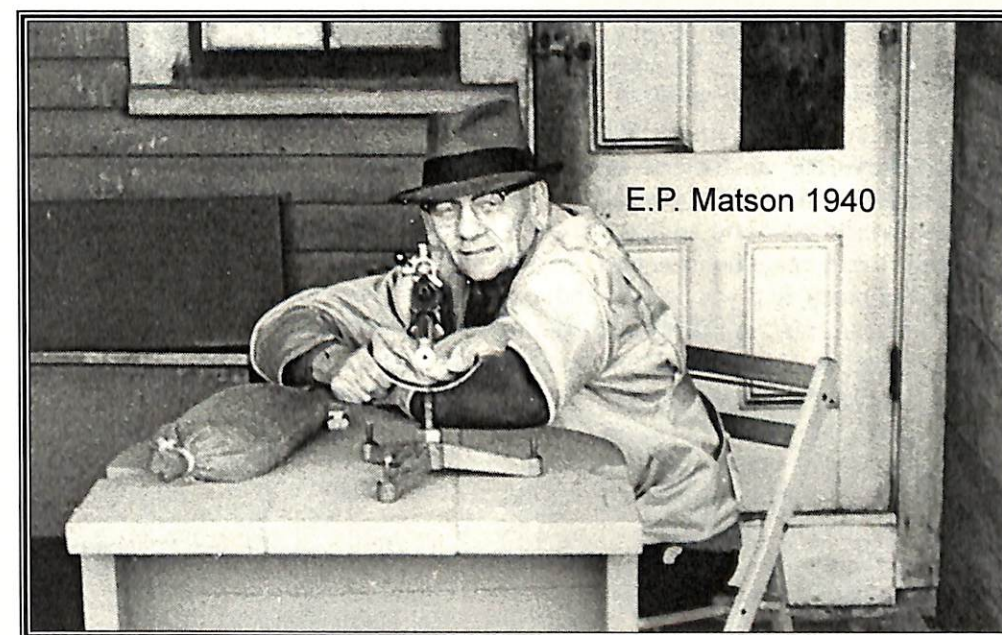
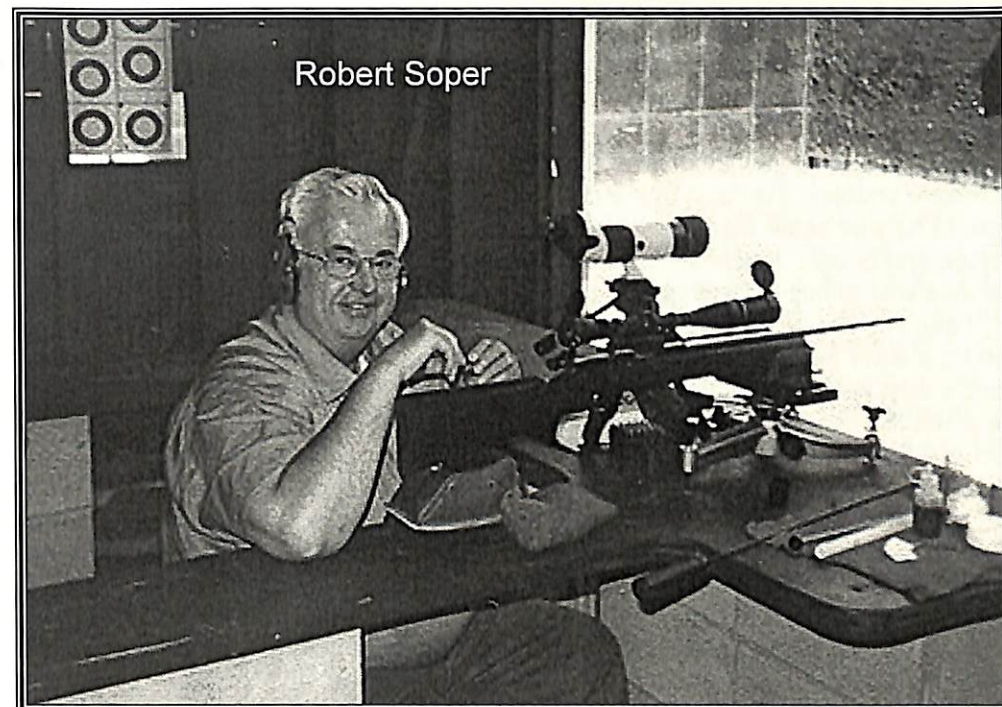
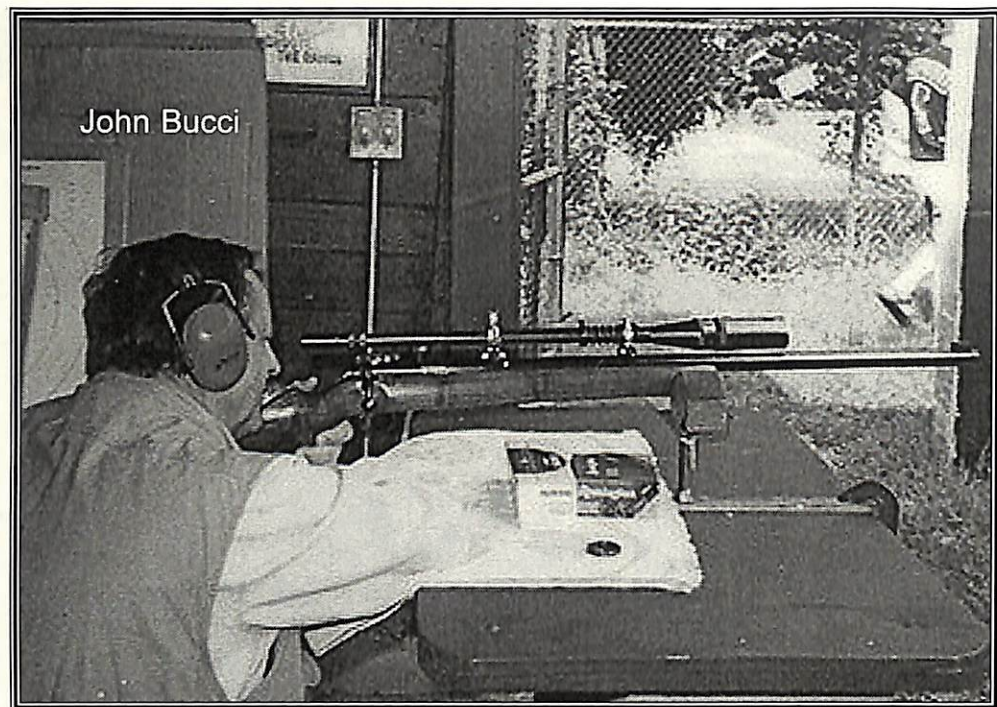
Richard Stanton



Robert Summa









Sometimes, the more things change, the more they stay the same . . .

I came across a story in my research of Walnut Hill that I feel you will enjoy. It's neat when you look at the present and the past, and find events that are considered funny, both now and then.

In 1890, a new member of Walnut Hill started rifle shooting after reading about some incredible shooting events in that era at Walnut Hill. Being rich and bold-thinking, he thought he was better than the finest shots of the Hill, and visited all the gun shops of Boston and bought Winchesters, Marlin's, Remingtons, and all the pistols he could find. His idea was to buy his scores with the finest rifles and pistols of the time.

I see you are snickering at the story. Trust me, it gets better as you read on. He also bought a S&W pistol 44 caliber Russian, after he saw the fine scores of Ira Paine, the world's best pistol shot of the time. But his scores were terrible, so he thought it must be the pistol. So he sold it and bought a Stevens single shot. Now he will be the finest pistol shot of Walnut Hill (no snickering over there). But, alas, he was the worst shot of the Hill, and when some of the members would see him on the range, they would laugh at him and tell him that he was the worst shot on the team. He looked at the scores of the pistol shooters and the pistols they shot. He never learned, for he thought by buying the same pistols and ammunition, he could be better than them, for they were old and gray and he was the best shot in the state. Only if he could buy all their pistols and rifles. Oh-hum.

Now we are back to 1892. Our shooting teams were doing great. A new pistol shooter joined the MRA and, after looking at the teams, the scores, and the rifles and pistols they were shooting, he felt he was better, for he was rich and bold and smarter than the old and gray shooters of the Hill. He felt he was better than them all. In his mind, he thought "move over and die, you old bastards, for I am taking over the shooting world, for I will buy the finest pistols, rifles, and ammunition, and outshoot you all." But, alas, he shot a Colt and stunk on the range. Of course, it must be the pistol. Then he shot a Stevens (snickering are we), then a S&W. Still can't shoot. "All the pistols are terrible," he thought. "It can't be me, for I am rich and young. Maybe they hexed me. Oh-hum, those old and gray shooters of the Hill." But then he saw the scores of D.L.F. Chase and F.J. Rabbeth and, looking at their rifles, said to himself that he could outshoot them if he bought a rifle like theirs. So he went out and bought the same rifles, scopes, and ammunition, and thought to himself, "I can beat you now, for I am rich, young, and handsome, and have never had a hair out of place, and you are old and gray." (No snickering, please.) But, alas, he was still the worst shot of the Hill, for Rabbeth was rest shooting at 200 yards and shot 40 consecutive shots, all of which (with the exception of two) were placed on and in the eleven circle of the Standard American Rest Target. These are the ten shot scores, and count 119, 117, 118, 119, out of a possible 120 points - the finest scores of the day. He came in last in that day of shooting. Oh-hum. What can it be? The rifle must be bad. Or is it the ammunition? Or maybe the scope? I will buy a new rifle and scope, then I will be the finest shot of the Hill. Ha, Ha, Ha - watch out, for I will be back, for I am rich, young and bold. Now, you can snicker all you want, for he was still the worst shot of Walnut Hill, as the team members told him on the range. Oh-hum. "What am I doing wrong," he thought to himself, "for it's not convenient to go to the range and practice every day." Oh-hum, oh-hum. What can it be? As you can see, the answer is funny is it not??

Yes, long range shooting is alive and well in America today.

Today's shooters are at 1,000 yards and beyond. You can see .50 calibers shooting at 3,000 yards to break a record shot yesterday. It's a fast and furious game. Also .30 calibers at 1,000 yards and beyond. Yes, the new Winchester short magnums have and will continue to make their mark in the shooting world right here at MRA. Bill O'Neil, Paul Dandini, Paul Jenkins, and Charlie Trickett have returned from Quantico. The match was shot at 1,000 yards, and Bill's new rifle - called "Thumper" - performed outstandingly. These gentlemen are all distinguished shooters of Walnut Hill. The scores tell it all - great shooting. As Charlie and Bill spotted for each other, all you can hear is X-10-X-X-10-9. Oops, as they are shooting at 1,000 yards. As you know, Bill has been testing some new powders all summer, and has put it all together. He is shooting 240 gr. Sierra's at 1,000 yards. Wow! It's a one hole group at 200 yards, as the quest for perfection continues. Bill is weighing his primers, and the scores tell you something about it - it's something to look at shooters. Note: at the match, Charlie and Bill spotted for each other. At one point in the match, Charlie was behind Bill spotting and trying to see the 240 gr. bullets going down range. But he found he was hampered by the turbulent flow of air and gases all over the bullet. As a point of interest and curiosity, he had to move over three positions to see the bullets going down range, as Bill has an interest in the rebated boattail and bullet swaging.

The rebated boattail is not new to the shooting world. Lapua made them in the 70's. In shooting the rebated boattail, as the bullet exits the rifle barrel, the step in the base provides a sudden exit that makes the transition time shorter. It gives the jets of gas no chance to work on one side or the other, as there is no turbulent flow of gas or unburned powder, and air over the bullet. The step acts as a spoiler, as the gas and air flow are pushed out the sides. As they hit the step in the bullet, you can see it will be more accurate. So in talking to Bill about the rebated boattail, Christmas did, indeed, come early. He now has some 215 gr. rebated boattails to test his theories on long range shooting. So, see you on the range!

P.S. The dies are made by Richard Corbin at RCE, and they have an 8 caliber Ogive. As you know, he makes the finest swaging presses and dies in America today. See his website at [www.rceco.com](http://www.rceco.com) or call 1-541-512-0440.

## Major C.W. Hinman November 19, 1896

Major C. W. Hinman, of Boston, has recently made a series of experiments with the Winchester rifle, model 1895, for the .30 caliber U.S. Army cartridge. Major Hinman's object was to learn the capabilities of this rifle with a reduced charge, in order that he might use the lightly loaded cartridges in the same rifle he uses on large game. He loaded his shells with a few grains of smokeless powder and the .32 Smith & Wesson revolver cartridge bullet, weighing 85 grains. He reports securing marvelous accuracy at a distance of 50 yards, placing ten shots in a group 1 <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> X <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> inches. With such a bullet we should expect to find a rifle loaded, but Major Hinman says he did not encounter this trouble, and thinks he has found as near the all-round rifle as he ever will.



## The Riflwoman 1897

The most casual observer must have noticed the increasing number of women who are becoming interested in the sports, which were formerly participated in by men only. In nearly all departments of field sports we frequently hear lately of women sharing the sport with men. Rifle shooting has recently proved attractive to women, and from California we often hear of the prowess of the riflwomen who regularly attend the weekly meets of the Columbia Pistol and Rifle Club, Last week we printed the score of Mrs. J. W. White, who shot at the range of the Haverhill, Mass., Rifle Club, and she made the top score, too, on the German ring target, off-hand, at 200 yards. We had hardly recovered from our surprise at this performance when we received word of the election of Mrs. Sarah Elizabeth Briggs, as a member of the Massachusetts Rifle Association. This conservative organization of twenty-one years existence has never before admitted a woman as a member, but now it is likely that other women will be enrolled as members of this association and similar organizations. She was a superb rest shooter, as she shot her Stevens 25/20 rifle at 200 yards. We have her rifle in our museum. She also shot a 38 caliber rifle at rest as we have a target she shot-in the office hanging on the wall.

Mrs. Briggs became interested in shooting when Miss Annie Oakley visited Boston and was invited to give a shooting exhibition at Walnut Hill. All the Ladies of Boston were invited to see Miss Oakley shoot at Walnut Hill. So all the Ladies of Boston went to North Station to get the train to Woburn and get off at Walnut Hill Station, as the train made extra runs to Walnut Hill and wagons took them all to the Hill to see Miss Oakley shoot.

They all had a great time, as a lunch was provided by the members of the Hill. It was a glorious time and a warm sunny day at the Hill when the shooting event started. It was exciting to see this beautiful little Lady shoot as the men and women looked on in awe to the fancy shooting. She never missed her target during this exciting exhibition, and when she finished all the Ladies of the Hill gathered around her, talking about shooting, rifles, pistols, and shotguns. As you can see, a new generation of shooter was born on this day, as they all told their husbands, fathers, and gentlemen friends to teach them how to shoot. As they say, the rest is history. One gentleman of the Hill was heard saying, "Next they will want to vote." As they say, the truth will set you free. Ha, Ha, Ha So the Ladies of the Hill who frequently accompanied their husbands, fathers, or gentlemen friends to Walnut Hill to do some shooting with a rifle or pistol. As you can see by this story, women have unusual skill in shooting and are frequently better, and some men of the Hill were unmercifully beaten by their wives, daughters, or lady friends This is something the men of the Hill had not calculated on as this great event is recorded in the great history of Walnut Hill.

There is but one trouble we can think of that is likely to follow the development of the riflwoman. She will, when she becomes familiar with the rifle, shoot too well, and some of the poor men will be humiliated by being beaten. Women possess a keenness of vision, a delicacy of touch, a quick perception of little things, all of which, when properly applied, count greatly in fine rifle shooting. How mortifying it will be for some luckless men who have long enjoyed reputations of being crack rifle shots to be eclipsed by the coming riflwoman. In rifle shooting, skill must be recognized. If a fellow-we beg pardon-if a person shoots well and makes the top score, he-how hard it is to get out of the ruts-they are applauded and take the highest honors. Some of the unfortunate riflemen who have had a monopoly of rifle shooting for so many years we fear must now retire to the ranks of has-beens, and be content to tell about how well they used to shoot, or else brace up and try to shoot better.

## Walnut Hill 1899

October 21, 1899. In marked contrast to today's conditions of unsteady gales were those enjoyed on Wednesday at midweek shot, on which day perfect weather was experienced.

Mrs. Sallie E. Briggs on that day secured a score of 119 and had a run of 12 successive scores. (See target on bottom of back cover.)

Medal and badge Rest Match with telescopic sights: Mrs. Briggs (later Mrs. Eugene E. Patridge, first woman member of the Massachusetts Rifle Association.)

11-12-12-12-12-10-11-12-12-12=116

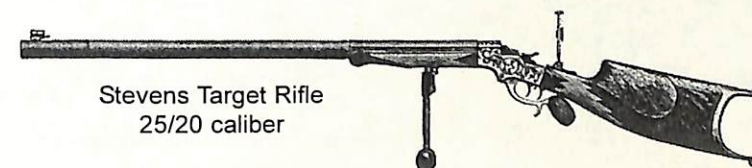
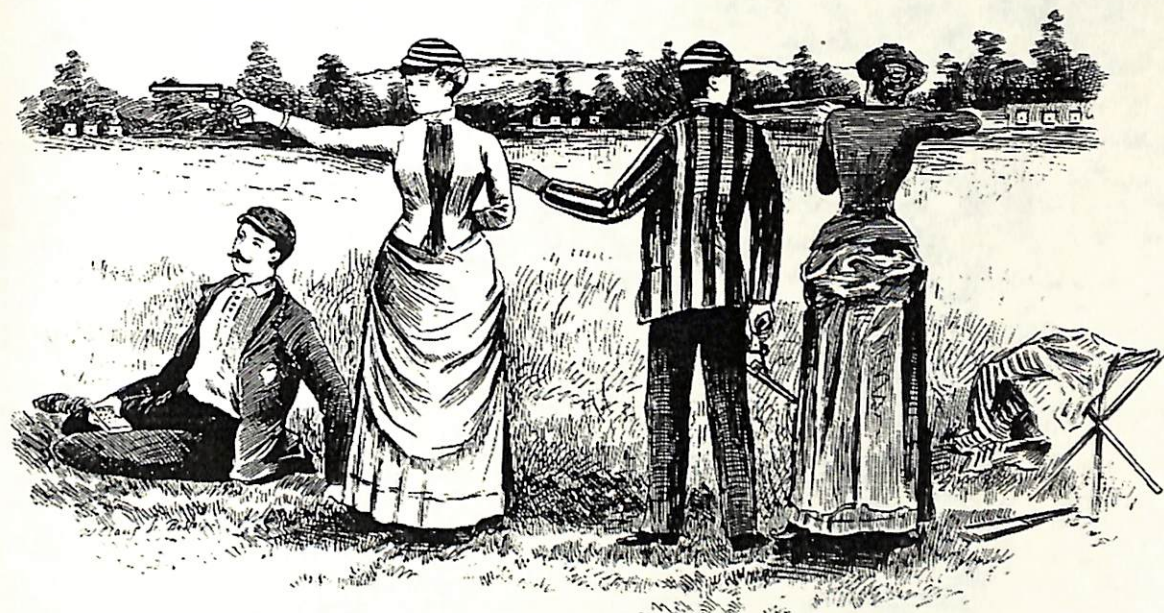
11-12-12-12-12-12-12-12-12-12=119

12-12-10-11-12-11-11-12-12-11=114

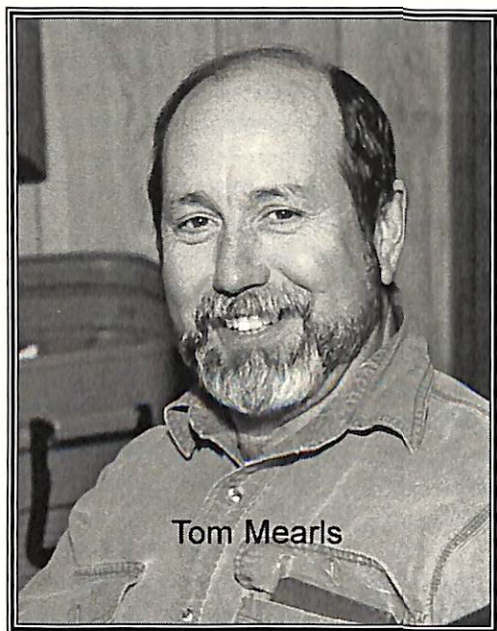
12-10-12-10-12-11-10-11-11-12=111

Boston Sunday Globe, October 22, 1899 The Rest target was christened at Walnut Hill, May 14, 1887. First possible were shot by Henry L. Willard, June 22, 1895, August 28, 1897, September 8, 1898.

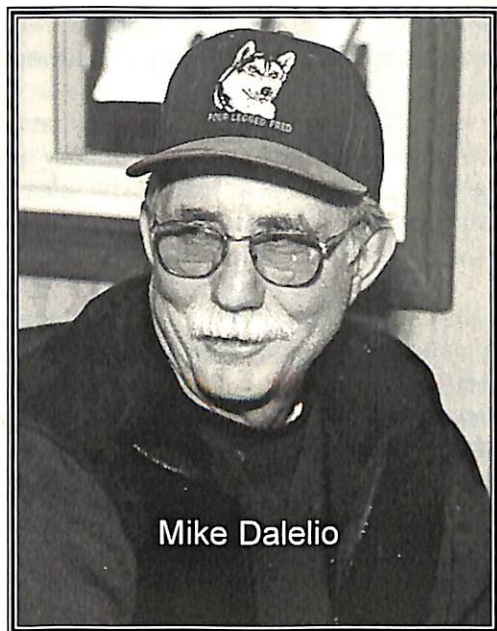
Mrs. Patridge made the next December 8, 1900, and April 27, 1901.



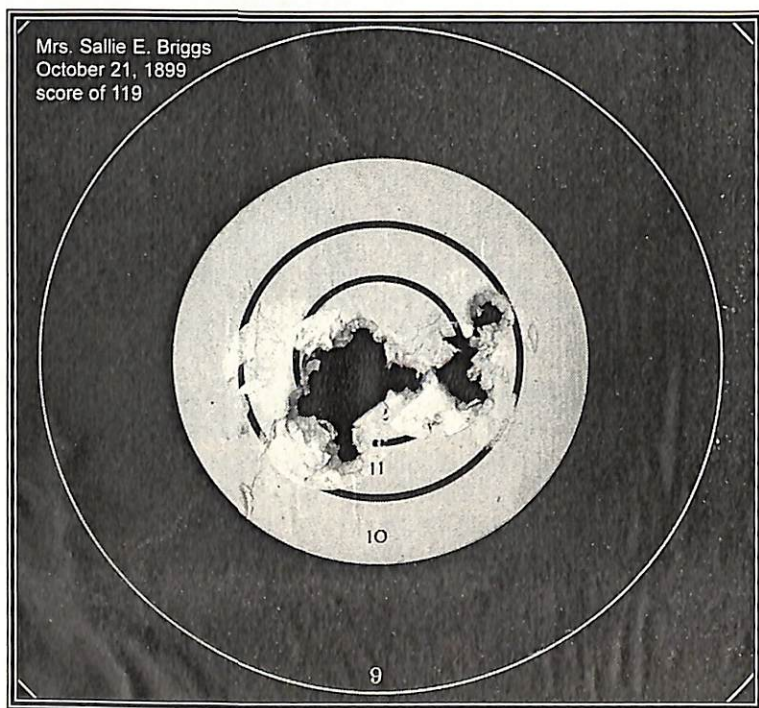




Tom Mearls



Mike Dalelio



Mrs. Sallie E. Briggs  
October 21, 1899  
score of 119